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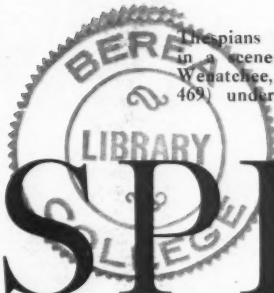
The
HIGH SCHOOL

SCHOOL

THESPIAN

COVER PICTURE

Thespians Carla Schernitzki and Phil George in scene from *The Patsy* as staged at the Wenatchee, Washington, High School (Troupe 469) under the direction of Miss Grace Gorton.



VOL. XV. No. 2

A National Publication Devoted To Dramatics in the Secondary Schools

35c Per Copy



NOVEMBER, 1943



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THE EDITOR'S PAGE

THE article concerning dramatics in the State of Virginia, by H. Darkes Albright, which appears on page 12, deserves the thoughtful consideration of all who are interested in educational progress. While it is true that in a number of states, among them West Virginia, Illinois, and California, dramatics is at a higher level than that existing in Virginia, it is equally true that no state is free of some of the conditions observed by Prof. Albright. Poorly qualified teachers, inadequate library and stage facilities, low standards of play production, and the abuse of dramatics in the name of education, are prevalent in numerous school systems throughout the nation.

Of course, the social and economic conditions observed by Prof. Albright are not within the province of teachers to correct. But there are a number of conditions which can be corrected by dramatics teachers. Take, as an example, the question of class plays. No sensible school administration would think of having its football games played by the senior class, or have its band concerts given by the junior class, or have its glee club programs present by the sophomores. Football is played by a carefully coached group of students who have shown the required qualifications; the school band is composed of students who can play musical instruments; and the glee club is made up of students who presumably can sing. But this logic does not apply to the school plays. Here we have, in many schools, the "class plays." In this play only the seniors participate; in that play only the juniors are privileged to appear. It matters little that there may not be a single member of the senior class who can give an acceptable performance; nor is there any great concern felt that no member of the junior class who will appear in the play has any knowledge whatsoever of what constitutes acting. The sole determining qualification is that these students are seniors or that they are juniors.

Why is this so? The answer is well-known: "school traditions," "it has always been done in the past!" How can anyone dare change a school custom that has been in effect for five, ten, or even twenty years? And what are the results of this unbreakable policy? Prof. Albright gives the answer: "In this way, as in others that we shall examine, the drama program is complicated unnecessarily by irrelevant and non-essential factors."

What can the dramatics director do to correct this condition? First, we recommend a heart-to-heart talk with the school principal. Let him know that "class plays" are educationally unsound and unfair to the students who appear in them, and unfair to the teacher who must direct

them. Let him know that class plays were discarded long ago by the really progressive school systems. Let him know that in place of the class plays, these progressive schools have substituted plays given exclusively by the dramatics department or by the dramatics club, with the casts composed of students who are interested, who have shown the required talents, and who have had some degree of training in dramatics.

Second, tactfully invite school officials to compare the productions given by the dramatics department with those given as "class plays." The superiority of the former should be easily noticed if the dramatics department or club is in charge of capable hands. Third, if the classes feel that they are being denied honors and attention, "dedicate a major play to the Senior Class," or have the spring play "staged under the auspices of the Junior Class." It works beautifully for all concerned. And no longer will the harrassed "dramatics coach" exhaust herself looking for that "class play in which every class member has a part."

Let's take another example. Prof. Albright observed that at least a third of the schools surveyed had no drama shelf at all, in the sense that they are practically without even plays or play collections. One half of the schools had no playlists and catalogues from publishers. And very few of the libraries contained books or magazine articles on play selection. All this in a day when magazines and newspapers carry dozens of articles on the theatre, radio, and the movies. All this in a day when one publisher after another offer books on every conceivable phase of the theatre and the drama, at rates easily afforded. It takes only a postal card to each of a dozen publishers to bring to the school a supply of valuable play catalogues and descriptive folders that every alert dramatics teacher must have.

Let's read Prof. Albright's article with the care it deserves. Then let's survey our own dramatics program. Do we have a drama shelf worthy of the name in our school? Do we really know and recognize the elements of a good high school play? Are we making any effort to improve our productions by making them projects of the dramatics department or the dramatics club? Are we making any effort to better our qualifications for the task which is ours, by reading professional magazines, by reading carefully chosen books on the theatre and the drama, and by taking now and then a course in dramatics, or one in makeup, or one in stagecraft?

A playwriting contest open to men and women in the armed services, with manuscripts being accepted from those who are overseas as well as those stationed within the country, is being sponsored by the National Theatre Conference. A total of fifty-eight cash prizes amounting to one

thousand dollars will be offered in four classes of competition. In addition there will be twenty-two scholarships and fellowships given by leading universities. These become effective after the war is over and the winners have been discharged from active duty. November 15, 1943, has been set as the deadline for all entries. Further particulars may be secured from Barclay S. Leathem, Executive Secretary, The National Theatre Conference, University Theatre, Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio.

Two recent motion pictures amply demonstrate the high degree of perfection which can be reached in the arts of the theatre. In *Heaven Can Wait* the extraordinary and skillful makeup for the leading player, Don Ameche, through the various ages from early manhood to extreme old age, stands in our opinion as the best piece of work of its kind ever shown on the screen. In *Watch on the Rhine* Bette Davis and Paul Lukas reach new levels in the art of achieving sincerity in character portrayal.

Thousands of our young men and women now serving in the armed forces are not only deriving greater satisfaction from the dramatic entertainment offered them, but are also in a better position to create and produce their own entertainment, all because of their participation in dramatics back in their high school days. For further proof of the truth of this statement get the opinions of any of your former students now in the armed forces. Which reminds us that dramatics teachers whose courses are considered "non-essential" by certain persons should secure from their students now in the armed forces, and present to their school officials, letters concerning the value of dramatic training.

The enthusiastic endorsement being given "The High School Theatre For Victory Program" is truly encouraging to all who appreciate the role of the educational theatre in wartime. If your group has not yet enrolled in this worthwhile cause, you should do so immediately. Enrollment is absolutely free and you receive valuable materials and assistance you will not receive otherwise. You give, furthermore, proof that your dramatics group does have a place in the war effort.

There are many dramatics groups throughout the country that are producing original patriotic programs worthy of production elsewhere. If you are among these groups, we suggest that you send us a copy of your script for our examination. We shall publish in these pages those scripts which we regard worthy of publication. And if you have had unusual experience and success in preparing and presenting dramatic material for the war effort, we suggest that you tell our readers about it by sending us a short article. For an example of the type of article we want read Miss Alberta Johnson's article on page 7 of this issue.

THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN

Edward Gordon Craig

(The second in a series of seven articles on great men who have made the modern theatre.)

by BARNARD HEWITT

Chairman, Dramatics Committee, Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, N. Y.

A YOUNG English actor, when he was introduced to Gordon Craig, exclaimed: "Oh, Mr. Craig, I expected to meet something black and satanic and I meet something white and angelic!" The contrast between that young man's expectation and the reality of Craig's presence may well stand for all the contradictions which have sprung up in the path of the plow Craig has driven through the theatre. For many theatre workers he has been a devil indeed: banishing the painter from the theatre, banishing the playwright, first dwarfing the actor with towering scenery, then hiding his face with the mask, and finally banishing the actor too and replacing him with some monster called the "Über (super) Marionette"! For others he has been the only truly inspired prophet, prepared to purge a decaying theatre of its corruption, breathe new life into its fainting limbs, and make it once more a medium for the highest artistic expression.

Almost from the publication of his first essay, "On the Art of the Theatre", in 1905, Craig has been attacked from many directions and with amazing bitterness. Lee Simonson, the American scene designer, devotes a chapter of his book, *The Stage Is Set*, to roasting Craig. He calls him among other things, "an exalted mountebank, a demagogue of decided literary gifts." Craig's writings have been denounced as vague and contradictory. The scene designs, which have had such a tremendous effect on the entire modern theatre, have been called "irresponsible improvisations of a romantic water-colourist." Simonson even goes to the trouble of reducing one of Craig's designs for *Macbeth* to scale, in order to show that it would require a stage with a proscenium opening 190 feet high. One gets from Simonson a picture of Craig, not perhaps as a devil (devils are out of fashion,) but as a neurotic escapist who, because he could not succeed as an actor in competition with his gifted mother, Ellen Terry, and with Henry Irving, in whose company he served his apprenticeship, fled to Italy, and there, shrouded in a long black cloak, dreamed hopelessly impractical day-dreams of an "ideal" theatre, awakening from time to time to hurl bad-tempered diatribes against a world which refused to hand him \$100,000 to produce a series of plays or to found a school of the theatre.

One might think Craig would long since have been pulverized by the attacks he has suffered, but he needs no sympathy.

Apparently a born controversialist, he has never lacked for an answer. Whenever he has found a worthy foe he has charged gladly into battle and laid about him with might and main. For years he has been carrying on a feud of titanic proportions with perhaps the foremost controversialist of our age, Mr. Bernard Shaw. The feud dates back to Craig's acting days at the Lyceum, when Shaw tried to get Henry Irving to abandon romantic drama in favor of the new-fangled problem plays Shaw was writing, and when he failed in this, attempted to lure Ellen Terry away to act in his plays. Craig had no use for plays which made the theatre a rostrum for social preaching, and he said so. He was once commissioned to design settings for a projected production of Shaw's *Caesar and Cleopatra*. Shaw, indignant, rejected the designs, saying he'd be damned if he'd have his play produced behind a grid. Craig later published the design at issue, pointing out that the characters in the scenes were caught like rats in a trap and that his setting was designed to express that essential characteristic of the scene. In his book on Henry Irving, Craig defended the actors (of whom he is sometimes called the arch-enemy) against the tyranny of Shaw's extremely detailed stage directions. And when Shaw published the correspondence between himself and Ellen Terry, Craig objected in the public prints to what he



Edward Gordon Craig

felt was an unjustifiable revelation of private matters. In reply Shaw said Craig was a bad boy who had never grown up and recommended a spanking. Craig countered by calling Shaw "a poke-nosed old woman."

ONE thing is certain, no one who has met Craig has seen in him any sign either of the diabolic or of the neurotic. On the contrary he seems always to have impressed people as a man of great physical vigor and an unusual personal charm. An interviewer wrote of him in 1911: "He, if any man, is the Happy Warrior, a joyous, happy, child-like soul, devoid of all the disagreeable qualities that usually accompany strenuousness, and innocent of the jealousies and the bitternesses which too often streak the artistic temperament." Fourteen years later Carlo Linati wrote of him: "I have never seen a more living and luminous man. Craig . . . has a beautiful, prophetic head, a shock of white hair, and the ready, gay, vivid conversation of a young poet."

Those who treat Craig as a scene designer ignorant of acting must not belittle the experience of his early years. Born in 1872, the son of Ellen Terry, darling of the English stage, he made his first stage appearance at the age of six, toured America with Irving's company playing a small part in *Eugene Aram* at thirteen, and before he was twenty-five, when he gave up acting, he had played Mercutio, Charles Surface, Malcolm, Romeo, Hamlet, Petruchio, and Macbeth, to mention only the best known among many important parts. His acting won the praise not only of his mother, who might perhaps be expected to be indulgent to her only son, but of the critics, and most important of the master, Henry Irving, himself.

Those who accuse Craig of being impractical, a dreamer content to write books and draw designs but unwilling to test his theories and his drawings in the theatre, are forced to minimize a by-no-means brief list of actual productions, beginning in 1900 with his production in London of Purcell's opera, *Dido and Aeneas*. Before he left London in 1904, he had added *The Masque of Love* from the opera, *Dioclesian*. Handel's opera, *Acis and Galatea*, Laurence Housman's play, *Bethlehem*, and two other plays with his mother in the leading roles: Ibsen's *The Vikings* and *Much Ado About Nothing*. In Europe he designed *Venice Preserved* for production at Otto Brahm's Lessing Theater in Berlin, Ibsen's *Rosmersholm* for Eleanora Duse in Florence, *Hamlet* for the Moscow Art Theatre's famous production, and Ibsen's *The Pretenders* for Johannes Poulsen at the State Theatre in Copenhagen.

The nearest this country has come to a Craig production was in 1929 when Douglas Ross produced *Macbeth* here with Florence Reed as Lady Macbeth and with "designments" by Gordon Craig. I

saw that production, and although it was possible to believe that Craig had made sketches for some of the settings, it was perfectly obvious that a New York scene construction studio had departed very far from the original designs. The early productions in London had a very favorable press. It has been charged that Craig's setting for *Rosmeholm* was too big for the stage and dwarfed the actors. On the other hand, it was said that although the lesser actors seemed out of place in the setting, it was marvellous for Duse. The scenery for *Hamlet* is said to have fallen down. Craig says it didn't. Stanislavski says it did, but doesn't blame Craig for the disaster. The Moscow correspondent of the *London Times* wrote of Craig's contribution to that production: "By the simplest means he is able in some mysterious way to evoke almost any sensation of time and space, the scenes even in themselves suggesting variations of human emotion."

NEVERTHELESS, to an extent his critics are right in minimizing Craig's productions. His tremendous influence on the modern theatre has been exercised much more through his designs, which have been exhibited almost annually since 1902 in one or more of the important cities of Europe, and through such of his books as *On the Art of the Theatre*, *The Theatre—Advancing, Scene*, and *Towards A New Theatre*, which contain not only reproductions of his fascinating designs but also essays on theatrical art which have startled, alarmed, or inspired readers for nearly forty years. What is there in these essays to produce such an electrifying effect? Here one finds Craig's denunciation of the painter, of the playwright, and of the actor. Here is his denunciation of "realism" in the theatre and his plea for "reality." Here is his argument for the revival of the mask. Here is his scheme for the "durable" theatre and for the "transitory" theatre, for his "thousand scenes in one scene" and for his "one scene with a changeable face." What can one make of the paradoxes, of the apparent contradictions? When one first reads Craig, one wants to fight with him, to prove him wrong. Later one wants to find the key to his writings, to bring order out of the apparent contradictions, to find some consistency beneath the paradoxes.

There is an underlying consistency. Craig is determined that the theatre shall be an art, and consequently he rebels against the collaborative nature of most theatrical production. If there is to be an *art* of the theatre, there must be an *artist* of the theatre. Not a *collaboration* of playwright, scene designer, stage director and actors but *one man* who shall write the play, design the settings and costumes, compose the music, if music is needed, and direct the actors. Or to put it another way: one man who

Wartime Playlist Available

An impressive wartime playlist describing several hundred plays and pageants suitable for production by high school dramatics groups as contributions to the war effort is now available **FREE OF CHARGE** from The National Thespian Society. The list, which was prepared by a committee of high school dramatics teachers, is being furnished to all dramatics groups which are now enrolling in the High School Theatre For Victory Program. If you wish a copy of this playlist address your request to The National Thespian Society, College Hill Station, Cincinnati, Ohio. Enclose 6 cents in postage with your request.

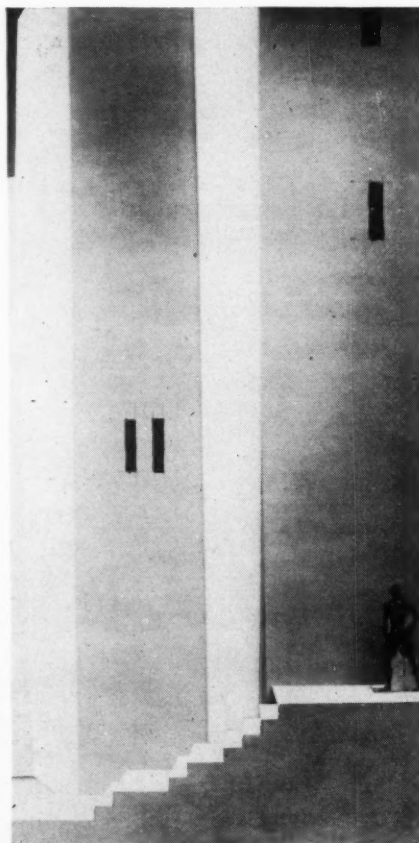
will create the production in the theatre out of the materials of the theatre: actor and scene. If there is to be an artist of the theatre, he must be able to control his materials. Costume, scenery, light, all of the materials of production except acting, are inanimate and therefore subject to the control of anyone who will take the trouble to master them. But acting introduces other human beings, subject to the

whims of their own emotions and to the vagaries of their own egos. If the artist of the theatre is to control the actor, the actor must first gain control of his own body and, second, lose his egoism, thus becoming the perfect instrument, the "Über-Marionette." Craig is opposed to realism in the theatre, because in his opinion realism is the imitation of the accidental, fleeting externals of life, whereas the function of art, and therefore of art in the theatre, is to express the eternal, fundamental truths of life.

The artist of the theatre must have a medium of expression: where is the common denominator in such diverse elements as the actor's speech and movement, light, setting, costume, music? Craig decided that movement is the essential; he selected *movement* as the medium of theatre art. If movement is the medium, then every element must move. The actor moves, and gives movement to costume. Light is capable of movement. But what about the setting? It is comparatively inflexible. Hence the "one scene with a thousand faces," a single setting which under a play of light, constantly changing in direction intensity, and color, gradually alters its appearance to correspond to the essential dramatic movement of the scene. Hence, Craig's "one scene with a changeable face": an arrangement of light neutral screens which could *actually* change its shape slowly and subtly in conformance with the dramatic movement of the play. Art demands unity; therefore if acting is to be natural, let it be completely natural, let the words and movements be improvised, but if the words and movements are to be set beforehand, let the actors be masked. Thus, if Craig's fundamental beliefs are understood, most of his apparent inconsistencies disappear, and the logic if not the practicability of his demands becomes clear.

It is nearly forty years since Gordon Craig first published his theories and the world has travelled far since 1905. Some of his theory seems a little old-fashioned today. Craig is fond of the word "beauty" usually capitalized, and the word "beauty" has for some time been out of style. One is perhaps inclined today with Mordecai Gorelik to say that "Craig is . . . an ardent champion of ivory towers," and to ask what is this "Truth" which the art of the theatre is to reveal. Nevertheless, Craig focussed the spotlight of unsentimental criticism on an activity which because it combines elements of commercialism and art in a collaborative effort often falls far short of artistic goals.

Craig has often been called "child-like" by his friends as well as by his enemies. He seems to me like a tremendously vital and very precocious small boy who deliberately went about setting off firecrackers under all of the theatre's sacred cows, not out of devilry but out of overflowing high spirits and a firm determination to shock a doddering theatre into new life.



Scene designed by Edward Gordon Craig for a production of *Macbeth*. (Courtesy Vandamm Studios.)



Nila Mack, director of the popular "Let's Pretend" series of radio programs is shown here surrounded by children who have appeared and who are still playing in the weekly program. (Photo courtesy Station WCKY, Cincinnati, Ohio.)

Popular Radio Programs

The Second in a Series of Seven Articles on Radio Appreciation for High School Students

by ALICE P. STERNER

Barringer High School, Newark, New Jersey, and author of "A Course of Study in Radio Appreciation"

THESE silly quiz programs just try to make fools out of the people. Radio certainly provides cheap entertainment for morons."

"American radio is the most entertaining and popular means of communication ever provided for any people. It is a vital factor in maintaining wartime morale."

Which of these two divergent opinions is correct?

RADIO is mass communication. Because at any one time large numbers of people are listening, and since it is very easy for them to tune out if they dislike the program, radio must necessarily seek to win a wide audience. Because it has to please so many, radio is frequently accused of being superficial, sensational and repetitious. Whenever one type of program becomes popular, so many others like it follow that the air is finally glutted with this one kind. In order to please everybody, it is charged, radio aims at the poor taste of the below-average American, and he is never given an opportunity to hear anything that will improve his standards.

At other times radio advertisers are blamed instead of radio executives. In order to please their potential customers, they give the public what it wants and never anything that would displease even a small minority. As long as American

radio depends on sponsors to pay its bills, you will have these accusations, whether justified or not. A United States citizen is never forced to listen to any radio program; therefore in order to win his attention he must be given what he likes—no matter whether the critics deplore his taste or not.

Popular tastes in radio programs change. Remember how the air was flooded with all kinds of amateur programs a few years ago. Today only the original Major Bowes production survives. We are now in the midst of the quiz

Some Types of Quiz Programs and Their Variants

| | |
|-----------|---|
| Sunday | — 7:30—Quiz Kids 10:30—Take It or Leave It |
| Monday | — 8:30—Better Half 9:30—Dr. I. Q. 10:30—Information Please |
| Tuesday | — 8:30—Noah Webster Says |
| Wednesday | — 8:30—Take a Card 8:30—Battle of the Sexes 10:00—Kay Kyser |
| Thursday | — 9:30—Let Your Hair Down |
| Friday | — 9:30—People Are Funny 9:30—Double or Nothing |
| Saturday | — 8:30—Truth or Consequences 10:45—Who? What? When? Where? |

(All Time is Eastern War Time.)

vogue, or rather more likely witnessing its gradual eclipse. Whenever you see so many strange variations of a radio type appear, you can be sure that its waning popularity demands all kinds of additions to make it palatable to the public. Of course, the old favorites persist, but the many strange variants toll its knell.

Quiz Programs

QUIZ programs have had unique developments. Dr. I. Q. was one of the first with his silver dollars and pleasant way of minimizing losing answers. "Take It or Leave It" with its choice of subjects and increasing difficulty of questions furnished a new variant. "The Quiz Kids" precocious answers intrigued adults more than children. "Information Please" was the exact opposite of most programs of this type, for the questions came from the radio listeners to a group of experts whose erudition amazed us all. "Double or Nothing," "Truth or Consequences," "Who? What? When? Where?" and numerous others attest to the popularity of this form and the ways it can be adapted. Britain's favorite quiz program, "Brain Trust" is quite different from any of ours. A question leads to a serious discussion by experts of such problems as: "Define freedom in its fullest sense." This turns out to be a forum. Fortunately a few stations here rebroadcast the program so that we can judge it for ourselves.

Why have quiz programs been so popular with Americans? Many answers are offered. Some praise American education for developing an inquiring mind, eager to learn something even in entertainment. Others charge that the financial reward is the incentive and that the facts learned are unimportant and frequently silly. "It Pays to Be Ignorant" is a delightful, although at times rowdy, satire on this national desire to make a game out of questions. Whatever the cause, this craze for quiz programs is a continuation of listener participation, already begun in amateur productions, hobby shows, and side-walk interviews. "We the People," "Vox Pop," and "Hobby Lobby" are continuing examples of this earlier tendency.

Wartime Programs

A NATURAL continuation of audience participation and its adaptation to war conditions is the current armed force shows. "The Army Hour," "Army Air Forces," "Meet Your Navy," "The Man Behind the Gun," "This Is Fort Dix"—all are examples of this development. Frequently the story of some real war hero is dramatized. In others men are interviewed, who are introduced by name and home town. Americans have a great interest in people, especially their own men in service. Whether it be from the South Pacific, the Aleutians, Iceland, or Sicily—just to hear their voices and to be reassured by their brief comments is effective. Men in service in this country, skillful musicians, singers, or actors, provide a kind of amateur show far more fascinat-

ing than its earlier civilian counterpart. There is no doubt that as the war continues there will be an increasing number of these programs. Psychologically, it furnishes a unifying bond between civilian and service life, and for a few moments at least permits us to share vicariously the life of "our boys."

Comedy Programs

AMERICANS turn to comedy for relief and a new type of program has developed in which the participants vie with each other in telling jokes. Earlier comedians had variety shows in which an orchestra, singer, and often brief dramatizations were joined with the jokes. Now, "Can You Top This?" emphasizes the joke alone. Here we see that it is the manner in which the joke is told as much as the subject that makes it funny, for we roar at old stories with new settings. Other programs of this kind will probably appear. "That's a Good One," is already an example.

Mystery Programs

MYSTERY drama, both crime and horror, has always been popular. However, it seems that the tragedy of war has dulled our taste for its fictional counterpart. The same reaction was seen on the stage and screen in the last war. Stark reality is vivid enough for us now; we want relaxation in comedy. The old reliables, "Gang Busters," "Crime Doctor," "Lights Out," still continue, but few new ones have appeared recently. Perhaps such programs as "Counter-Spy" and "Alias John Freedom" take their place with their current wartime settings.

Human Relation Program

ANOTHER popular program is the human relations forum. Alexander's "Mediation Board" has a group of experts who give advice on personal problems. Mr. Anthony on the "Goodwill Hour" alone guides the participants. Such programs are of doubtful value. It is charged that the cases want notoriety and sympathy, that such problems are too involved to permit a quick solution on such thin testimony, that an individual should make his own decisions without putting the burden of his problems on another's shoulders. Others say that people who are facing similar dilemmas are aided when they hear impartial opinions, that it makes those of us who are more fortunate realize that we have no real cause for unhappiness, that we learn to understand and sympathize with other human beings because we see their problems more concretely. Perhaps the answer is that if handled properly the advantages will accrue; if poorly presented the faults will be magnified.

Musical Programs

MUSICAL programs have always provided a large part of radio entertainment. From swing orchestras to grand

Good Theatre Publicity

(1) Good publicity is not publicity at all, but news. It should suggest, rather than state, the information that it seeks to give.

(2) Good publicity should never be looked on as an adjunct to advertising. The publicity director should not attempt to barter news space for advertising space with the editor. The material to be published must be looked at from the point of view of the editor who is always interested in a good news story, seldom if ever in an attempt to use the columns of his paper primarily as a means to sell tickets. "Live," well-written publicity stories command space and get it.

(3) The publicity director must find, for any stories that he wishes to publish, real "news angles"—even if he has to create them. Something must be discovered to set each production apart from all previous shows. If several publicity stories are planned for a given production fresh news value must be given each story.

(4) Each community and each production will have particular situations that may be exploited for genuine publicity. The publicity director should study his problem in relation to the local papers and the policy of the editor. His main endeavor should be to prepare material that the editor will want to print: for example, news.

(5) In the intervals between productions the publicity director should be constantly on the alert for interesting material. It is his job to keep alive the public's interest in the project even at times when no play is in production.—Reprinted from the *Virginia Drama News*.

opera their range is great and their popularity continuous. We shall discuss them more in detail next month. Kay Kyser combines this musical type with the quiz program, and lately his visits to army camps show how all three elements can be fused into popular entertainment.

Judging Popular Radio Programs

MOST of us enjoy popular programs more when we listen with our family or friends. We like to show off by telling the answer to a quiz program before the participant gets a chance. How much funnier a joke is if we can turn to a friend and enjoy laughter with him. Human relations programs evoke much discussion, and it is pleasant to be able to argue out a problem immediately with one who has shared the program with us. Service programs are more thrilling when you feel the group response to their appeal. Perhaps in this type of program, more than any other on the radio, we feel the need of sharing our experiences with another. Radio has done more than most recent inventions to bring entertainment into the home and to bring family groups and

True or False?

1. The horror of war has made the horror radio play less attractive.
2. Americans are provided with the entertainment that they should have on the radio, rather than what they want.
3. Audience participation in programs is dying out.
4. Service shows are psychologically unsound because Americans don't want to hear about war all the time.
5. The manner of telling a joke is as important as the joke itself.
6. The popular British quiz show, "Brain Trust," resembles more nearly our radio forum.
7. A high school pupil can do nothing to influence the type of program presented on the radio.
8. Human relations programs are of doubtful value unless they are carefully presented.
9. Popular tastes in radio change.
10. Most people prefer to listen to popular programs when they are alone.

Answers

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. True | 6. True |
| 2. False | 7. False |
| 3. False | 8. True |
| 4. False | 9. True |
| 5. True | 10. False |

friends closer together in shared fun.

As you young people listen to this type of program, you should ponder these questions: Is the program catering only to the "lowbrow"? Are the American people wasting their time over cheap, tawdry entertainment? Does this program try to make fools out of the participants by slap-stick means rather than achieving comedy through situation? Is the knowledge of the extraordinary, unimportant detail glorified rather than the practical, essential facts? Is it right for people to have to reveal their innermost suffering to entertain a vast radio audience? Does the sponsor try to win the greatest popularity by providing silly senseless entertainment? Is the most popular program necessarily the best? Should a radio station give people only what they want or should it try to lift the level of popular taste?

Finally the problem faces each one of us. Are we entirely satisfied with radio entertainment today, or do we wish to see it improve? Many of us, especially young people, feel that one person can do very little alone when there are so many millions of listeners. However radio executives are very responsive to any public criticism. Youth especially should be interested in the radio of the future, for any improvement will probably be gradual. Seven million high school pupils who discuss radio in their classrooms, at home, and with their friends, who write to praise programs of high caliber and to condemn those that tend to lower standards could influence American radio. Begin in your dramatics club, English classroom, or social studies forum to discuss radio. Write at least two letters this year to radio stations praising or deploring a popular program. Thus you will be doing your share as a citizen to improve American radio.

A Few War Programs

| | |
|-----------|--|
| Sunday | — 4:30— <i>Lands of the Free</i> 11:30— <i>Pacific Story</i> |
| Monday | — 7:30— <i>Army Air Forces</i> |
| Tuesday | — 10:00— <i>Passport for Adams</i> |
| Wednesday | — 9:30— <i>Soldiers with Wings</i> |
| Thursday | — 10:00— <i>First Line</i> |
| Friday | — 8:30— <i>Meet Your Navy</i> 10:00— <i>Thanks to the Yanks</i> |
| Saturday | — 2:00— <i>I Sustain Wings</i> 7:00— <i>Man Behind the Gun</i> |

(All Time is Eastern War Time.)



Three members of Stagecraft at the Wauwatosa High School are shown painting a huge backdrop used in the Milwaukee County pageant for the war chest drive. Colors: black silhouettes with background of crimson and green-blue. It takes light with a phosphorescent glow.

'Tosa Stage Not Frozen

by ALBERTA M. JOHNSON

Faculty Stagecraft Sponsor, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, High School

OUR stage is so busy these days that a special rehearsal can hardly be booked. Busy the year before Pearl Harbor with 277 scheduled events, the stage swung into full action with 320 rehearsals and performances to meet the wartime impact of school and community demands. It is satisfying to know that our long-range policy of *service* actually functions as we hoped it would when we dedicated our splendid facilities to general education three years ago.

In 1940 we resolved that our new stage and auditorium should not meet the fate of many school theatres throughout the nation, which were dark most of the time for lack of a managing staff and personnel. To insure adequate service, a student staff of fifty, directed by one faculty sponsor and one full-time technical man, organized to set all events, using a common store of scenery, properties and costumes. Many different faculty members shared the direction. Heads of Dramatics, Speech, Music and Academic Depart-

ments, and, occasionally, community or guest leaders work individually or cooperatively to direct plays, operettas, concerts, and many other types of programs. This system insures a distribution of responsibility and creative opportunity, while it draws upon numerous student talent groups. We have the signatures of about 600 student speakers, singers, actors and dancers who appeared the first year, and the number is increasing.

Varied Sponsorship

THE booking calendar shows that sponsorship of our wartime activities ranges all the way from the Dramatics Department to the Collector of Internal Revenue. Of the 150 finished performances offered by school and community groups last season, about forty were directly related to the war effort. Of course, the two major plays produced annually by the Dramatic Department are key features in our stage picture, but the central role of the stage in school life is

indicated by this partial list of patriotic program themes:

Armistice Day dramatization of Marsh's *American Canon* by advanced speech students.

Three Pan-American programs climaxed by *Fiesta Pan Americana*, presenting the music and art of South America by the A Cappella Choir and Stagecraft.

The Ballad for Americans, interpreted by the High School Symphony Orchestra and by the Choir.

A student written dramatization of the *Rights of the People*, commemorating Bill of Rights' Day, December 15.

Speech students interpreting great war literature—Millay's *The Murder of Lidice*; famous orations, such as Wallace's *Century of the Common Man*; and *See Here, Private Hargrove*.

Cornelia Otis Skinner, Eve Curie, Carl Hambro, sponsored by the Extension Division's Sunday afternoon lecture series.

Speech class performance of Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur's *It's Fun to be Free*, for commencement, and again for the State American Legion Convention.

Student reading of Carolyn Kizer's *Stars Through the Perilous Night*, and Stephen Vincent Benet's *Nightmare for Future Reference*.

Social Studies students' speeches on the *Issues of the War and Peace*.

Aeronautics teacher—outlining *Air Corps* opportunities.

Student Council imitation broadcast inaugurating *Our Schools at War* program. Students pledged *A Jeep a Week*. After sales of stamps and bonds reached \$6,000 a week they made a new pledge—*A P40 Pursuit Plane* before June.

Johnny Olson of WTMJ conducting a Junior High rally which netted \$10,000 worth of stamps and bonds in one afternoon.

Speakers from war industries, the Junior Red Cross, the National Safety Council.

One-act plays and group singing during air raid rehearsals.

Pep assemblies with a book for a soldier or salvaged keys as the price of admission.

Spanish classes presenting Pan-American flags, accompanied by the Orchestra playing the respective national anthems.

After-school matinee, one-act play, for China Relief.

Lyceum speakers from Turkey, Burma, China, Porto Rico, and North Africa.

Children's Theatre booking of *Yankee Doodle of U. S. A.*

Demonstrations of incendiary devices and explanation of bombs for city air raid wardens.

Graduation exercises of County Nurses. Newsreel releases of action in world-wide battlefronts.

Band Concert with student director leading the playing of songs and marches of the armed services.

Rehearsals now under way for Maxwell Anderson's *Miracle of the Danube*.

Non-war Plays

FOLLOWING the lead of Broadway, 'Tosa's Dramatics Department veered away last season from war subjects in choosing the major plays. *Little Women*, *Love from a Stranger*, and *Tommy* offered variety and relaxation. *Sun-up*, advertised as a war play, drew small houses, which seemed to indicate a public preference for non-war subjects.

Wartime "Green Room"

BETWEEN camouflage operations on stage, the student crew has taken its own headquarters in hand. The "Green Room" combining office and studio facili-



Scene from Act I of *Girls in Uniform* as produced at the Schuster-Martin School of the Drama, Cincinnati, Ohio. Directed by William Dawes.

ties, is newly decorated in modern tempo. Oddly enough, this artistic flourish is a reflection of the war situation, too. We might explain, that for many years the Dramatics Department has invested its earnings, about \$700 a year, in scenery, costumes and stage equipment actually needed in production. The staff's working quarters were functional, but roughly equipped with discarded school furniture. The large room lighted by windows running the entire length, and framing an avenue of trees outside, was pleasant enough, but we often felt it deserved better treatment than odds and ends of furniture accorded. Last year, as usual, we planned to invest in standard fixtures for the stage proper, perhaps a dimmer, or some portable light towers. We were unable to get a priority. So we had about \$150 available for non-priority purchases.

Coincidentally the Milwaukee County Handicraft Project, formerly the WPA, was willing to sell to the school some of its fine exhibition furniture, for the cost of the materials, plus a slight over-head charge. Thus circumstances combined, enabling us to carry out a long-cherished plan to do a little interior decorating of a permanent nature. The blond, but durable furniture we bought, arranges very well with the salvaged pieces, now also blond. Fantastic screen prints, and intricately appliqued and embroidered wall hangings, also from the project, combine with student sketches and with modern art reproductions to decorate the large wall areas. We were fortunate in being able to select screen prints which our former stagecrafters designed when they were assigned to the WPA project, as a part of their art course at the Milwaukee

State Teachers' College.

Community Service

IN addition to routing through our stage activities, the student personnel offered its services to many community clubs and enterprises. For example, three members of Stagecraft volunteered to paint a full size back-drop for the Milwaukee County Community War Chest Pageant in the Milwaukee Auditorium. We now have this study of marching soldiers as a back-drop for our own dramatizations. The school wardrobe (discussed in the 40th yearbook, *Art in American Life and Education*) has gone to war in patriotic pageants all over the County and helped to bolster defense workers' morale in a Y.W.C.A. sponsored fashion show in a war factory, and furnished humor at U.S.O. parties.



Cast and stage set for *A Connecticut Yankee* at the Benton Harbor High School, Benton Harbor, Mich. Margaret L. Meyn, director. (Thespian Troupe 455.)

The Russian Theatre Wages War

by ALAN SCHNEIDER*

Department of Speech and Drama, Catholic University, Washington, D. C.

"When our guns roar, our muses sing with a powerful voice."—DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH.

THE Russian theatre, like the Russian people, is waging total war. For over two years now, theatre in Russia has had only one job: to fan the people's hatred of the Fascist enemy, and to give expression to the culture and ideals they were defending. Every play, every film, opera, ballet, and concert is a blow struck at the invader, a weapon raised in defense of the Fatherland. As Professor Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana says, "Drama speaks together with the guns. Drama in Russia today is part of the national armament. It is a powerful force in the mobilization of the minds of men."

For us Americans to comprehend the full magnitude and intensity of the Russian theatre's war contribution is only slightly less difficult than it is to describe that contribution in detail within the confines of this brief article. What little can be mentioned, however, should impress us with the vitality of the role one war-time theatre is playing.

With the coming of the third autumn of war, Russia's actors, playwrights, and scene-designers are working even harder than they have been for the past two years. Thousands of acting units—"theatre brigades"—are performing for troops in the front lines, often within machine-gun range of the enemy. The number of new plays dealing with the war and with Russian history grows almost daily. More and more theatres are being opened up, both in the areas freed of the Nazi invader, and in sections in the interior. (As soon as a town is recaptured from the Germans, troupes of actors move in with songs and sketches for the soldiers, as well as for the town's civilian population.)

Theatre companies evacuated from Moscow in the early months of the war have gradually been returning to their former residences. Every theatre organization tries to keep its artistic standards as high as possible—and, at the same time, to help sustain among its audiences that faith in the future and that will to resist which have won the admiration of the United Nations. To the Russians, the theatre is as necessary to life as bread. In the midst of war's death and desolation, their theatre flourishes—with all the strength and exuberance of a people who

love life and are willing to risk life to defeat the hated enemy.

ON the eve of the German invasion, the Soviet theatre was 24 years old. Already it ranked among the leaders in theatre production. Hundreds of theatre groups, most of them subsidized by the national government, dotted the vast area of European and Asiatic Russia. Besides the permanent repertory companies, such as the famed Moscow Art Theatre, in the larger cities, trade unions, factories, and collective farms had their own dramatic societies. Many theatres presented plays for children and young people, but there were no high school or college drama groups. Almost any kind of play could be seen somewhere in Russia—from Greek tragedy to the comedies of George Bernard Shaw, from Shakespeare to Eugene O'Neill. (*Rose Marie*, an American operetta, has been playing in Moscow for 17 years.)

When the invasion began in June, 1941, Moscow was seeing five Shakespearean productions, including a performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in its new Red Army Theatre. On the next day, theatre people met all over the country—with the active recognition and support of the government—to plan for the total mobilization of the Russian theatre. With the help of state subsidies, troupes of actors were immediately assembled to provide entertainment and inspiration for the nation's fighters. Arrangements were also made to transplant leading theatres—complete with acting company, production staff, properties, costumes; with their entire repertory as well as new productions—deep into the interior, out of the path of the advancing foe. As the days and weeks went by, artists were not drafted into the army but were assigned specific theatre jobs for which they were qualified by training and experience. Many actors who wanted to enlist in the army had to be ordered to remain with their theatre company.

Since the war began, over 200,000 performances of songs, sketches, historical productions, etc. have been given for soldier and sailor audiences. Many actors have earned the title, "One Thousander", for performing 1000 times at the front. Shows have been given on the bridge of battleships and on the tops of gun turrets; in dugouts and air-raid shelters; on army trucks and in field hospitals.

Usually within easy range of enemy fire, often with their audience preparing to go into battle or having just repulsed

an enemy attack, these "theatre brigades" have been of immeasurable value in keeping up the fighting spirit of Russia's warriors. One group, performing near an anti-aircraft battery, was caught in a raid, and saw two enemy planes shot down by members of the audience. Many performers are wounded; many decorated for their service and valor under front-line conditions. Veterans of the last war, such as the great tragedian, Kachalov, have emerged from semi-retirement and are tireless in their efforts. Groups of younger actors stay at the front constantly, advancing and retreating with the troops.

Film actress, Zoya Fedorova, star of *Girl from Leningrad*, tells of one of her trips to the battlefield:

"We proceeded cautiously, for we had to traverse fields under fire. Sometimes we sank knee-deep in mud and early snow; often we ran from tree to tree while the bullets splashed in the mud around us; we crept behind shrubbery, across mounds and gullies, and finally reached the theatre entrance. This consisted of narrow steps leading underground to the dugout of a trench mortar detachment whose men couldn't leave their posts. It wasn't much of a theatre. The earthen ceiling was so low that we had to stoop, and the damp trickled down the walls. An unshaded electric bulb burned faintly. And our audience, a group of about twenty soldiers, was waiting impatiently.

"We were three: narrator Dmitri Orlov, actor Berezov, and myself. Bedraggled, tired, cold, we played as we had never played before. Narrator Orlov gave a stirring reading from *The Silent Don*. The men took in the words greedily. . . . They demanded an encore, and Orlov read parts of General Suvorov's *Science of Conquest*, words which inspired Russian soldiers under that famous leader of the Napoleonic wars. Our turn came next. . . . Together we performed a scene from Ostrovsky's classic comedy, *Balshininov's Marriage*, and a sketch from Alfred de Musset, *As Sometimes Happens*. Then, accompanied by an accordion, I sang songs from *The Girl From Leningrad* and other films in which I have appeared.

Another group performing during the siege of Leningrad had to live in shell-holes by day and crawl for miles at night, roped together for safety. Properties were dragged along by hand. Performances were given in murky dugouts under heavy fire from the German lines—not more than 100 yards away. And although the temperature was often below zero, the acrobats in the company stripped for each performance. This company managed to give some 1300 performances, as many as six daily.

What makes these artists willing and eager to undergo such rigors is the conviction that they are soldiers doing a soldier's job. The hunger for entertainment which they see in the eyes of the men, the warmth with which they are always welcomed, the letters they receive, keep them going in spite of weariness, hunger, and wounds.

The Red Army and Red Navy also have their own repertories of plays, their own theatres and theatre companies. These are constantly supplementing the many civilian troupes. The Kronstadt naval base guarding Leningrad, for example, kept its One-Act Theatre intact through a year of siege. Alexei Popov,

*Alan Schneider has been on leave from his post at Catholic University for the past two seasons. He was employed in the School Section of the OWI for a number of months. Lately he has served on a special assignment for the Education Section of the U. S. Treasury Department.

art director of the Central Red Army, describes a performance by Red Army men:

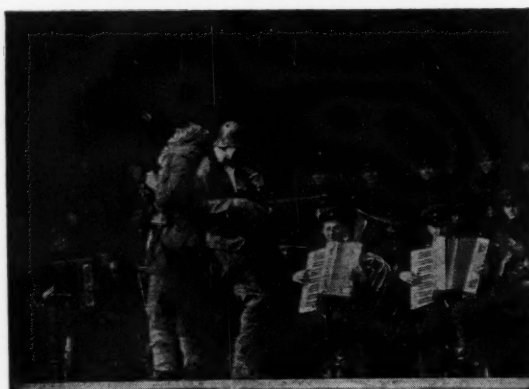
"We performed in a battered barn, half of which was camouflaged. Loud applause drowned the rattle of enemy mortar bombs exploding nearby. Signal men relayed the concert to their comrades on the firing line. . . . Twice we saw our audiences off to battle and met them a few hours later. To see a man going into battle, to bid him farewell by song and word, to meet him returning from the battlefield with a hymn to his gallantry—what prize can be higher for the true artist!"

Material used for army shows covers a wide variety of subjects and types. It may be seriously concerned with Russian history and the evil nature of her present-day enemy. It may be of general cultural interest—Shakespeare is a great Red Army favorite, particularly his *Taming of the Shrew*. Or it may be a sketch of a comic or satiric nature written by some frontline journalist. A stage version of the American movie, *It Happened One Night*, has been very popular.

Whatever the performance, the actors try to create an atmosphere of beauty, warmth, and even gaiety. Wherever possible they play in evening dress, the actresses taking special care to wear their most attractive costumes and to be perfectly groomed. There may be little or no scenery; proper lighting may be completely lacking; and the performers may have to depend solely upon a "plank and a passion." But the sincerity of the actors and the enthusiasm of the soldier spectators touches the whole with a beauty and a wonder that no polished peacetime performance could ever match.

Once when a performance was being given at the front, German shells began falling near the improvised stage. The Red Army Commander immediately ordered his gunners to silence the enemy batteries. With a smile, he added: "You must not let those Nazis interfere with drama."

THEATRE on the home front does not languish meanwhile. With the capture of some of Russia's largest theatre centers, such as Kiev and Kharkov, and the enemy drives on Leningrad and Moscow, most theatres simply packed up and traveled eastward. A month after the invasion, a Nazi bomb destroyed the Vakhtangov Theatre in Moscow, where a play about Napoleon's 1812 retreat was being acted. The company moved to the city of Omsk, and the play went on. The Moscow Art Theatre moved to Saratov on the Volga; other units scattered to locations in the interior, some as far as the borders of Iran, Afghanistan, and even China.



Scenes showing two Russian Army soldiers in *Fritz and Hans*, a caricature of two Hitlerites who are about to surrender. (Photo courtesy Soviet Embassy, Washington, D. C.)

Some theatre companies stayed. Not all the sufferings of war—including air-raids, disease, near-starvation, and the lack of light and heat—could keep the show from going on. Audiences, composed largely of Red Army men and their girls, continued to flock to the theatres. The Filiale Theatre, a branch of the Bolshoi Theatre, gave Moscow classical ballet and opera through the darkest days of the enemy advance on the city. One children's theatre also remained in Moscow—to tour anti-Fascist plays to Moscow's defenders—as well as to entertain children with *Puss-In-Boots* and *The Three Musketeers*. Tickets for young people's productions are generally sold only through the schools, and at low rates that everyone can afford. In two years of war, this theatre has given over 1000 performances.

During the siege of Leningrad, too, the theatre held on. Professor Dana tells of an incident that is perhaps symbolic. A production of *Othello* was being staged at 5:00 o'clock in the afternoon so that it might be over by the time it was dark enough for the Nazi air-raids to begin. This was called "beating Hitler to it." Once, however, just as *Othello* was ready to strangle Desdemona, the air-raid siren went off. A cry went up from the audience. Was it fear of being bombed? No, it was indignation that these uncivilized Nazis should have interrupted Shakespeare.

Gradually, the evacuated theatres have been coming back until now most of them are once more performing in their old homes. As far back as last fall, for example, the Maly Theatre swept the dust off its boards with a dramatization of Tolstoy's epic, *War and Peace*.

Meanwhile, the various national theatres in Georgia, Armenia, and other autonomous republics of the Soviet Union, are flourishing as never before. Theatre groups are playing before audiences who have never had a chance to see their work. Outstanding directors from Moscow and Leningrad are engaged in staging productions in small towns. Leading performers on tour are acting as their own porters and stagehands. Productions are staged in Ukrainian wheat-fields for farmers doing their fall harvesting, for factory workers in far-off Siberia, for students who are earning their 60 "labor-days" by working on farms.

The plays being produced in Russia, today fall roughly into three general classes: anti-Fascist and war plays, historical dramas, and classics. In the first category, Russian play-

wrights are turning out literally hundreds of plays, whose titles alone reveal their content: *The Smoke of the Fatherland*, *The Sky of Moscow*, *Invasion*, *On the Eve*, *Front*, *Partisans of the Ukrainian Steppes*, and *The Russian People*. The latter, recently produced in America by the Theatre Guild, received hundreds of simultaneous performances; many other plays are acted in five or ten theatres at the same time.

Plays about Russia's allies are also very much in evidence. Very recently, a play dealing with the resistance offered by guerrillas behind enemy lines included a highly sympathetic treatment of an American correspondent. In a country where literature plays a powerful role in forming public opinion, this is an important contribution to United Nations solidarity. (In choosing our own theatre programs, we could well take a lesson from the Russians in this respect.)

Other playwrights are turning more and more to Russia's past—particularly to the dramatization of earlier victories, which help to fortify the feelings of the present. Such productions as *War and Peace*, *And Quiet Flows the Don* (an opera), *The Patriotic War of 1812*, etc., are warmly greeted. Both these types of patriotic plays express the Russian's love of country and hatred of the enemy, his joy in living, and his contempt for death. Not all of them, perhaps, are great drama; but they serve to bolster up the courage and faith of the Russian people, and they are valid documents of a great nation fighting for its existence.

On the other hand, the classics—with their cultural and artistic values—are far from being neglected. Shakespeare and Richard Brinsley Sheridan, as well as Chekhov and Gorki, become contemporaries of Simonov (*The Russian Peo-*

ple). New versions of *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* have recently been prepared. The Bolshoi Theatre has just done Rossini's *William Tell*. *The Blue Bird* is almost always being shown somewhere. And the acting performance singled out for the highest award in Russia's equivalent of the Pulitzer Prizes this spring was a portrayal of Cyrano in Omsk by an artist of the Vakh-tangov Theatre.

The theatre has had its share of casualties. Numerous theatre buildings have been destroyed—sometimes purposely—by the invaders. Actors have been wounded, at times seriously, while playing in the front lines. And two of Russia's finest playwrights have been killed: Alexander Afinogenov—author of *Distant Point* and *On the Eve*—who lost his life while serving as an air-raid warden in Moscow; and Valentin Katayev, author of the gay comedy, *Squaring the Circle* (a favorite with high school and college theatre groups in the United States), was killed at the front.

THERE is not enough space here to discuss the other theatre arts—especially the film and the ballet. The efforts of artists in these fields have been as unrelenting as have those of their theatre colleagues. *Moscow Strikes Back* and *One Day of War*, two Russian films seen in this country, show that Soviet film directors mean it when they say that every film is a blow at the enemy. The latter picture cost the lives of 30 out of the 100 cameramen assigned to film, the actual battle scenes. As for the ballet: while German panzers were roaring to within 30 miles of Moscow, the ballet—like the annual chess tournament and the parachute jump in the Park of Culture and Rest—still remained an event. It is

TWO CHRISTMAS PLAYS

by
ELIZABETH McFADDEN

WHY THE CHIMES RANG:

Theme: a boy's good deed. Characters: 2 boys, 1 man, 2 women, 7 extras. Time: about 40 minutes. Scene: simple interior. Costumes: medieval. Special music.

TIDINGS OF JOY:

Theme: a Christmas today in your town. Characters: 6 boys, 6 girls, 6 older boys, 2 women, as many little children as desired. Time: about 40 minutes. Scene: simple interior. Costumes: picturesque and easily secured; Boy Scouts, Red Cross, etc. Music: any Christmas carols.

Books: 35 cents apiece. Royalty: \$5.00.

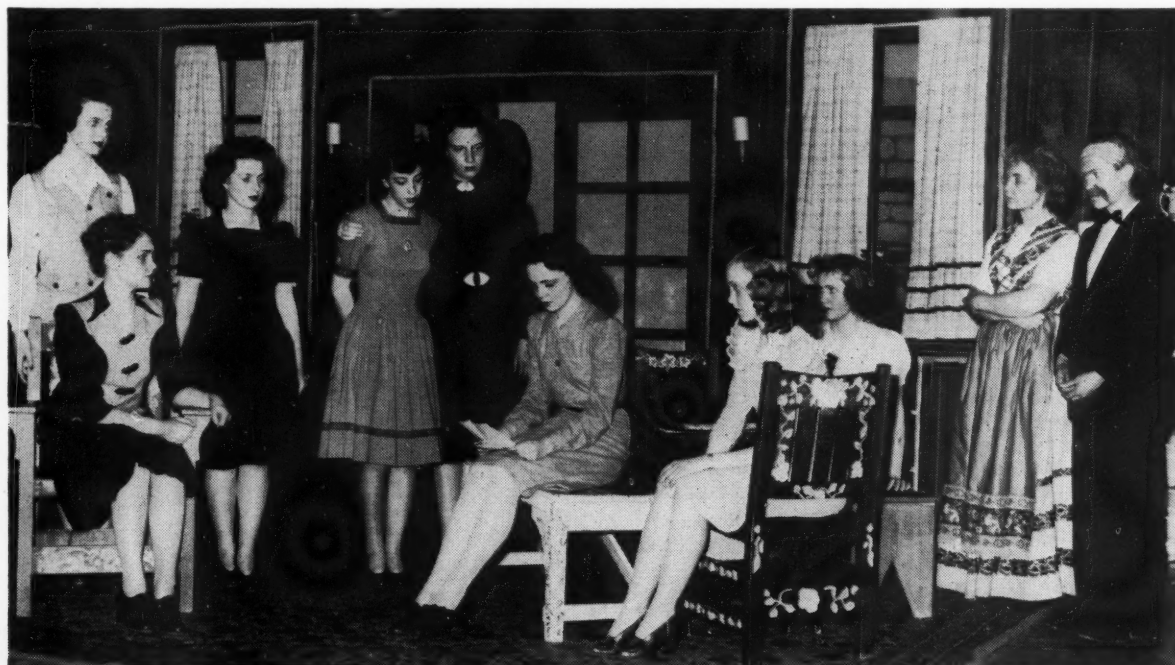
SAMUEL FRENCH

25 West 45th Street, New York
811 West 7th Street, Los Angeles

worthwhile to notice that a visiting British official, Lord Beaverbrook, lost most of his popularity because he snored through a performance of *Swan Lake*.

Despite the size of its contribution, the Russian theatre is not yet satisfied. Plans for the future are continually being discussed: plans to increase the number of theatres and performances, plans for more Red Army theatres at the front, for the production of new plays and for longer touring of old ones; plans for encouraging additional national theatre activity, for opening theatre buildings left empty and partially destroyed by the German occupation. All hearts and minds are waiting for that sacred day when the Fascists will finally be driven from the soil of Russia, and the theatre can once more build for peace. In the meantime, the workers of the Russian theatre confidently continue their vast labors—with the discipline of good soldiers, the unselfishness and determination of ardent patriots, and the zeal of true artists.

(Author's Note: Material for this article was gathered largely from an article by George Beiswanger in *Theatre Arts* for November, 1942; an article by Professor Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana in the 1942 *Theatre Annual*; and the publication, *Soviet Art in Wartime*, issued by the Soviet Embassy in Washington. Ralph Parker's articles in the *New York Times* were also helpful.)



Scene from *Letters To Lucerne* as staged by the Black Masque Dramatics Club of North High School, Denver, Colo. Directed by Miss Katharine A. Ommann.

Dramatics in the High Schools of Virginia

by H. DARKES ALBRIGHT
Cornell University Theatre, Ithaca, New York

Enrollment

ONCE the enrollment of roughly 150 is reached, apparently the size of the student body in itself has comparatively little influence on the size of the production program, unless the enrollment goes beyond about 750. I have the general impression that this holds true as well for the quality of the production program, except in special cases. . . .

Class Plays

In view of the long-established tradition of the junior or senior play, it is only to be expected that an appreciable majority of the long plays were presented by junior and senior classes. Indeed, much of the drama "program" in all but the largest schools is still entrusted, for better or worse, to these classes, rather than to drama-study or play-producing groups. Choral or orchestral concerts and various types of school demonstrations or exhibits are usually, and rightly, handled by interest groups or at least by groups drawn from the entire school; not so, the plays. *In this way, as in others that we shall examine from time to time, the drama programs in Virginia high schools are complicated unnecessarily by irrelevant and non-essential factors. . . .*

Royalty

A further analysis of the royalty situation shows that while only one out of three schools ever gave SHORT royalty plays, about three out of five have at some time recently given a LONG royalty play. The fact that a royalty is asked for a given play is generally granted as one important criterion of the play's worth. But the term "royalty," no matter how much money is involved, does not, in itself, guarantee a good play. There are, on the contrary, scores of long plays, for which royalty is regularly charged, although many of these are neither appreciably different from, nor markedly better than, the growing list of non-royalty or budget plays urged by the publishers on the high school director. That more and more of these directors—often against strong opposition—are attempting to give plays, for which any royalty is charged, is a hopeful sign for the future. At the same time some criterion other than royalty should be evolved to serve as an additional guide-post in play selection. . . .

Dramatics Clubs

Most of these clubs are set up, it must be emphasized, as "activities" groups, on roughly the same basis as other hobby or

THE material contained in this article is taken from the report of a state-wide survey on the status of dramatics in the schools and communities of Virginia, made by Dr. H. Darkes Albright for the Extension Division of the University of Virginia. Dr. Albright, who is a member of the faculty at Cornell University Theatre, made his survey during the months from January to September of 1942. This material is reprinted with permission of the *Virginia Drama News*, in which the full report was published last season under the editorship of Anne I. Faulkner and Roger Boyle.

We regard Dr. Albright's survey one of the most revealing investigations of its kind ever made in the history of school dramatics. His findings should be read and fully digested not only by dramatics directors, but also, and perhaps with even greater concern, by school administrators and others in whom the direction of the school program has its source. There are states, several of them, in which high school dramatics enjoys a higher status than that found by Dr. Albright in Virginia, but there are still in all states scores of school systems in which dramatics, if not totally ignored, is abused, adulterated, and distorted, all in the name of education.—Editor.

recreation clubs sponsored by the typical American high school. The program arranged for the ordinary club meeting, therefore, treats plays and play production in only the most general terms. The fundamental aim is to catch, and if possible temporarily hold, the interest of a highly mixed and constantly shifting group of students, most of whom have only the vaguest of dramatic intentions. A large percentage of the members have no expectation of working seriously on a production, and many of the most active drama students in the school are members of some other club. I mention such details at this place only to emphasize how little the average dramatic club—at least as presently constituted—is able to concern itself with genuine dramatic "training" and "experience," in any ordinary sense of those words. . . .

Dramatic Training of Teachers

However, not more than 15-18% of these teachers have had any academic

training whatever in dramatics or related speech work; and not more than 5% have had several courses in these fields. Indeed, not many more than half of them have had even appreciable experience in college or community theatre productions. . . .

As might be expected, the drama teachers in Virginia are for the most part English teachers. There are only a few cases, in which they have absolutely no relation to the English work. In very few cases are they drama or drama and speech specialists. . . .

Knowledge of Stage Equipment

In the second place, I have observed that almost without exception superintendents, principals, and teachers—usually not to their discredit—know very little about proper space-arrangements and proper equipment for stage or auditorium. *Even the better directors, the wise selectors of plays, the superior teachers are without background in these somewhat technical aspects of our problem.* They are, therefore, too often at the mercy of architects who for the most part are themselves not school or theatre specialists, and of companies whose first concern is the sale, rather than the installation or use, of scenic or lighting equipment. It is to be hoped that in the future the Director of the Bureau of School and Community Drama may offer suitable advice and assistance in this matter to school authorities throughout the State. With the cooperation of the State Department's architects, and sooner or later of a State Supervisor of Speech and Drama, his influence may well be considerable.

Library Facilities

At least two-fifths and probably a half of our 397 accredited schools have available for day-by-day reference not a single handbook on any of the various phases of play production. Indeed, at least a third of the schools have no drama shelf at all, in the sense that they are practically without even plays or play collections. The median number of drama books of all sorts available is ten or twelve, the average eighteen or twenty. Publishers lists and catalogues are in over half the schools practically the sole source of suggestions or materials on play selection. Very few library shelves contain books or magazine articles on play selection, or even lists or bulletins prepared by independent agencies.

Dramatic Aims

Even though all sizes and types of schools and communities are represented in the replies, weaknesses in the distribution make it unwise to generalize from any of the minor distinctions indicated in the table. I suggest, however, that certain major differences in ranking are significant. In the first place, the aims directly concerned with money-making

THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN

RANK OF FUNDAMENTAL AIMS CONSIDERED BY 49 PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS (1942)

| Order of aims as ranked after tabulation | | Order of aims as ranked after tabulation | SUBJECT of the aims as they appeared on the form |
|--|------|--|---|
| 1 | (7) | | To develop self-confidence, poise, and responsibility in participating students. |
| 2 | (6) | | To develop better voice and speech in participating students. |
| 3 | (4) | | To provide a general cultural and artistic activity for students participating in plays. |
| 4 | (2) | | To provide for the development of those students especially talented and interested in the dramatic arts. |
| 5 | (10) | | To provide for the student body a balanced and controlled program of entertainment. |
| 6 | (12) | | To provide a high level of cultural or artistic experience for the student body. |
| 7 | (8) | | To broaden, through vicarious experience in the dramatic arts, the participating student's understanding of human motives, and relationships. |
| 8 | (9) | | To develop in the participating student critical standards of drama, fine art, and the theatre. |
| 9 | (11) | | To provide for the community at large a balanced and controlled program of entertainment. |
| 10 | (1) | | To provide an educational activity for the many average students who have some interest but no special talent in the dramatic arts. |
| 11 | (13) | | To provide a high level of cultural and artistic experience for the community at large. |
| 12 | (5) | | To provide social recreation for students participating in plays. |
| 13 | (14) | | To train directors, actors, and other workers for future leisure-time dramatic productions in the community. |
| 14 | (19) | | To provide movie appreciation and guidance. |
| 15 | (18) | | To publicize the school program in general. |
| 16 | (15) | | To make money for continuing or developing the dramatics program. |
| 17 | (3) | | To provide vocational training for a professional career. |
| 18 | (17) | | To make money for Junior and Senior Class funds. |
| 19 | (16) | | To make money for other educational programs within the school at the expense of the dramatic program. |

(i. e., those originally numbered 15, 17, 16) were considered of relatively little importance and were therefore accorded very low rank. Secondly, almost all the aims concerned with the *individual participant* (those originally numbered 7, 6, 4, 8, and 9 in particular) were considered of relatively great importance and were given preponderantly high rank.

Again, aims concerned with *student-body needs and functions* (originally numbered 10 and 12) were considered fundamentally less important than the aims for individual students; but were considered MORE important than the aims concerned with the *general public* (original numbers 11 and 13). This latter point is recognizable not only in the general rankings of various groups of aims,



Four members of Troupe No. 191 of the Webster Groves, Mo., High School as they appeared in production of *The Little Foxes*. Directed by Miss Shirley L. Pratt.

but in the specific fact that training workers "for future leisure-time dramatic productions in the community" was given thirteenth place in importance. Finally, aim number two was ranked appreciably higher than aim number one, even though number three was given a very low rank. I take this to mean that, while vocational training for a professional career is held of little importance, yet providing for the development of especially talented and interested students is probably of greater value than, or is at least equal to, providing for average students who have some general interests but no special talent.

This, then, is what under more or less ideal circumstances teachers and principals would prefer to do with their drama programs. On the whole, they are clear about what they want; and in my opinion they are for the most part educationally, culturally, and aesthetically sound in their judgments. So far as their theoretical objectives are concerned, it would be a waste of time to berate them—as some have done—for shortsightedness and bad taste.

Unfortunately, as the school people would be ready to admit, conditions throughout the State are rarely in keeping with such admirable theories. The type of play produced at the present time, the lack of continuity and coordination

in the planning of programs, the inferior quality of production by even the mildest of secondary school standards, all operate against achieving the very aims that seem so clearly approved. Making money for junior and senior class funds, for example, or for other purposes unrelated to educational drama, is stressed out of all proportion to its theoretical value. Unfortunately, moreover, it is stressed almost inevitably at the sacrifice of more valuable or more important objectives.

I think it expedient to insert some generalizations regarding the broader social, economic, and educational influences at work in Virginia schools and communities. I am aware that, in considering the level of dramatic development here and elsewhere, the especially interested person is only too likely to assume that drama is unique in its difficulties. He is likely to miss the rather obvious point that a school is bigger than its drama program, and that the latter can rarely move any faster or any farther than the school as a whole. For a number of reasons, principally economic, Virginia has its share of backward communities and backward schools; and no amount of enthusiasm or good will can make drama programs alone rise above them.

It is not unusual to find white teachers, particularly women, teaching in



Scene from the comedy, *Hitler Has A Vision*, at the Iron River, Michigan High School (Troupe No. 475). Directed by Miss Evelyn Nyren.

county high school for less than \$900 yearly; and Negroes can expect even less. One white principal, who assured me he was no exception, remarked that he alone out of his entire school system was forced to file an income tax blank in 1942: none of his unmarried teachers made as much as \$750, and none of his married ones came near \$1,500. Such circumstances will hardly attract or hold the best possible teachers, nor encourage them to add to their training during the summer.

The "hard luck stories" I have heard are many. In one accredited school, the community and the school board expect the principal to pay for most of the school's electric bill out of "school funds"—that is to say, funds gathered from candy sales, entertainments, and alas, cheap plays. Another community will crowd the auditorium to hear a two-hour program of hill-billies (in person), but will turn up in one-twelfth the numbers at one-half the price to hear the best play the school has ever been able to offer. Others have yet to buy their first projector or mimeomachine or typewriter for the school; and until these are bought, they "certainly would not expect the principal to use a royalty play." Additional examples would add up to the same total effect: the patience, the interest, and the skill of even the best school people cannot, in extreme cases at least, rise above the economic and, so to speak, educational level of the community.

These facts, while sometimes overlooked, are quite well known, and I do not wish to labor the point. But I do wish to emphasize that they do not tell the whole story. With the possible exception of the very smallest schools (less, let us say, than a fifth of them), most administrations could, once they decided they really wanted to, have a markedly improved and more effective drama program; and with a little help, they could have it at no appreciable increase in

HOW TO TEACH HIGH SCHOOL DRAMATICS

By KATHERINE OMMANNY

You will find this authoritative course of study, as well as a wealth of other information, in

The Dramatics Director's Handbook

Compiled and Edited by
ERNEST BAVELY

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College Hill Station, Cincinnati, Ohio

official budget at no appreciable sacrifice of other programs. *This would take better planning, wider exploitation of existing resources, and a good deal of the "interest" that everyone seems to have, but I am convinced that the job could be done.*

In the first place, those responsible for local programs will sooner or later have to let educational drama stand on its own feet. *They will have to stop confusing it with money-making or senior class traditions or having a purely "social" time.* Just any play—chosen for irrelevant reasons, prepared haphazardly, and presented with a few signs of polish, clarity, or interest—will not guarantee for student participants or audience the values generally claimed for play production. Those who through ignorance or careless optimism assume that it will are, in my opinion, deceiving themselves. Unless the play, whether serious or comic, is chosen and presented for educational reasons and by educational standards, where are the educational values? Where are the "better voice and speech," the "self-confidence, poise, and responsibility," the "cultural and artistic activity," the "broadened understanding of human activities and relationship?" *There are other ways to pay for mimeographs and senior class gifts than by prostituting an educational program within the school.*

Secondly, those responsible must gradually seek and attract from the colleges more teachers who are at least oriented if not trained in drama work. Many of us are still trying to make bricks without straw. Even moderately successful programs can rarely be looked for if the director is to be *any* teacher or *any* English teacher or "the last man in." Once it is clear, or at least clearer, to the teacher-training institutions that the high schools really want partially trained and part-time drama or speech teachers in various subject-matter combinations, the institutions are going to accept more directly those obligations. As a corollary, I might add that a little recognition for drama teachers—both those now in service and those to be recruited—would go a long way. This recognition need not be necessarily or at least wholly financial. I mean only that neither experienced nor prospective teachers are going to reach out for additional drama training of even the most elementary sort until someone in the administration clearly indicates that the program is highly significant and important.

Finally, those responsible must do a little reorganizing of their thinking as well as their programs. Critical distinctions will have to be made between drama as a recreational hobby and drama as a creative art in education. Both of these, moreover, will have to be clearly distinguished from drama as one of the speech arts in general class-room procedure, particularly in English and social science, and *all* of them must be recognized as necessary to the "well-rounded" program we talk so much about. Above all, all these phases of a total program must be correlated, and the whole must be made continuous. One phase must lead to or from the other in an organized and progressive fashion; and it must never be assumed that if one of them is accounted for the others will inevitably follow.

There Are No Little Things*

(A War Savings Radio Script for High School Production)

by VIVIAN FLETCHER

CAST: five girls, four boys.
TIME: 30 minutes.

Music (*Fades under*).

Peggy: There are no little things.

Announcer: This story is presented by
..... High School. Like most stories it's
about a girl and a boy. It's about other things
too—a dress and the war and . . . but they'll
tell you.

Music (*Up brief then fades under*).

Peggy: It's funny the way things happen to
you. Things that—change you, somehow.
Change the way you feel inside and the way
you think. I keep remembering how it was that
day after school . . . me, in the empty class-
room, pretending to do my homework; and
those voices. . .

Music (*Up, turning mystic, and fades be-
hind*).

Russian Girl I (*Echo*): We Russian nurses
carry our wounded men from the battlefield.

Marine (*Echo*): It costs money for us to
fight in a place like Guadalcanal. Lots of it.

Russian Girl II (*Echo*): Your bandages may
save the life of this soldier.

Guerrilla (*Echo*): Any guerrilla will tell you
bullets speak the only language a Nazi under-
stands.

Music (*Up and out behind*).

Peggy: But I better start at the beginning.
Miss . . . , our English teacher, says that
when you tell a story you should set the back-
ground. I guess the background for what hap-
pened to me was the Senior Prom. That and
Mr. Wilkins, the janitor. It's funny how an
important day begins just like any other. You
go to school; sit through classes; answer a ques-
tion once in a while; watch Johnnie Carter
drawing pictures, the way he always does; and
wish, the way you always do, that they were
pictures of you. Then (*fading*) the bell rings
and . . .

Sound (*Classroom bell*).

Teacher: Class dismissed.

Sound (*General hubbub of dismissal*).

Voices (*Over*):

Don't forget the Prom committee meeting.

Who are you dragging to the Prom, Red?

Did you hear whose band we're gonna have
for the Prom?

You'll never guess who's dating Helen for the
Prom!

Wait! I tell you about the dress I'm getting
for the Prom!

Peggy (*Simply, without bitterness*): I had
no new dress to talk about. And no date. I
was out of it. The way a girl's always out of
things when they cost money she hasn't got.
Out in the hall, three or four of the girls hung
around Johnnie, talking about the band he'd
arranged for. I walked past them quickly but
Janie Barnes saw me.

Janie (*Calling*): Hey Peggy! Wait a min-
ute. (*Coming up*) You're the only one who
understands that algebra problem we had today.
Will you explain it to me? Mother says I
can't go to the Prom if I don't (*fading*) pass
algebra this month.

Peggy: I explained it to her and we started
home together. We were walking past Lan-
don's store when Janie saw the dress. . .

Janie: Peggy! Look!

Peggy: Where?

Janie: In the window—that evening gown!

You could have the pick of the school's man-
power in that dress!

(This radio play may be used on the air, or as
a "mock broadcast" at school assembly pro-
grams, without payment of a royalty fee. This
play is designed to further the sale of war
stamps and bonds within the school. A brief
talk on the need of purchasing war stamps and
bonds may follow the presentation of this play.)

Peggy (*Softly, with feeling*): Oh . . . it's
beautiful!

Janie: No price tag, either. It must cost
plenty. I'm going in and find out. Wait here
a minute—huh?

Sound (*Door opened and closed*).

Peggy: I waited. And I looked. Have you
ever seen something that you felt you just *had*
to have? No matter how much it cost or what
you'd have to do to get it? That's the way I
felt about that dress. I'd never had an evening
gown but it was what I'd always dreamed of.

Sound (*Door opened and closed*).

Janie: It's \$19.95! I sure am going to have
to work on Mother and Dad.

Peggy (*Sighs deeply*).

Janie: What's the matter?

Peggy (*Wistfully*): I was just wishing. . .

Janie (*Suddenly understanding*): Oh . . .
you're going to the Prom, aren't you?

Peggy (*Hesitantly*): I don't know—yet.

Janie: Of course you are. (*Awkwardly*) If
it's a dress you need—I can loan you one.

Peggy: No . . . no really.

Janie: Well, I thought I'd offer—you aren't
offended?

Peggy: Of course not.

Janie: There's Johnnie Carter across the
street. I just remembered something I had to
ask him about the band. Coming?

Peggy: No. You go on. And thanks again,
Janie.

Janie: O.K. See you tomorrow. (*Fading*).
Hi Johnnie! Wait a minute.

Peggy: I didn't even look over at Johnnie.
You see—(*painfully*) I was sort of—I liked him
a lot. He didn't know it, of course. Nobody
did. Suddenly a queer kind of—determination
swept over me. All my life I'd been content to
dream about things I wanted but, somehow,
this dress was going to be mine. I'd never had
\$19.95 for a whole outfit but there must be
some way of getting it. Wouldn't do any good
to ask Mom. With all the bills she had to pay
out of Dad's \$30 a week. I did have that five
dollars in my pocketbook though. They'd said
I could keep what I earned working in Mrs.
Orram's delicatessen on Saturdays. Maybe . . .
maybe she'd let me work nights, too! She had
said she needed somebody. She'd *have* to let
me. I took out my five dollars and walked into
the store.

Sound (*Door opened and closed*).

Saleslady: Can I help you, miss?

Peggy (*Hesitantly*): Yes. I—I want to buy
that evening dress in the window.

Saleslady (*Amused*): Well! Don't you think
you ought to try it on?

Peggy: Could I? Without hurting it? (*Em-
barrassed*). I mean . . .

Saleslady (*Kindly*): This is your first eve-
ning dress, isn't it?

Peggy (*Shyly*): Yes.

Saleslady: I'm sure it will look lovely on you.
(*Fading*) I'll have it taken out of the window.

Peggy: So they took it out of the window and
I went into the fitting room and tried it on. I
wasn't used to such an expensive store and I

Production Suggestions

Music:

If the school has an outstanding pianist
(and the station in which you are broad-
casting has a piano), cast him to supply
the music. The selection or composition of
"mood" music appropriate for each scene
or transition can be a very valuable educa-
tional experience.

If you have no pianist, find out from the
station what recordings are available and
have a competent person (perhaps some-
one from the music department) make the
appropriate selections.

Music breaks should take about 10 seconds.

Much of the atmospheric effect would be
lost if music were omitted but the script
could be produced without it by simply
allowing a 3—5 second pause in its stead.

Music must be "cleared" even though only
a few bars are played. The station should
be notified at least a week in advance giv-
ing title, author and publisher of each
selection to be played.

Sounds:

Sound effects required for the script are:
door opening and closing, sweeping, battle
noises, digging, gunfire, echo device, school
bell.

The station should be consulted to see if it
has recordings of these effects (larger sta-
tions probably will have) and, if they do,
these may be used. Some of the effects
may be simply manufactured by students.

Characters:

Peggy really carries the play and should
be selected with great care. She is a sen-
sitive, intelligent girl and should have a
very pleasing voice.

Johnnie is "boyishly" mature. Should have
good, masculine voice.

Mr. Wilkins is the understanding type
whom young people confide in, self-edu-
cated and philosophic.

Saleslady is "expensive store" type but
kindly and understanding.

Russian girls should be interpreted with-
out attempts at dialect unless you have
actors who are very skillful at it. This
also applies to Slav guerrilla.

Marine is a forceful boy, toughened by his
experiences.

Janie is a typical high school girl.

Teacher's voice and Russian soldier's
groans may be played by Saleslady and
Marine respectively.

was embarrassed at so much attention. Once I
had the dress on, though, I felt—beautiful.

Saleslady: It fits as though it were made for
you. And white is so becoming to you.

Peggy (*Softly*): It's—beautiful!

Saleslady: You're very lovely, yourself, my
dear. The dress brings out your best features.
Do you want it sent?

Peggy (*Embarrassed*): No, I . . . could you
keep it for me for two weeks? Until I can pay
for it. I can give you five dollars now but I'll
have to earn the rest.

Saleslady (*Doubtfully*): We don't usually do
that.

Peggy: But somebody else might buy it.

Saleslady (*Understanding*): This dress means
a lot to you, doesn't it, my dear?

Peggy: An awful lot.

Saleslady: Then I'll take care of it for you.

Peggy: Oh, thank you so much! Do you sup-
pose—could you leave it in the window so I
could see it every day as I go by?

*There are No Little Things is published here by
permission of the Education Section, War Savings Staff,
U. S. Treasury Department.

Saleslady: I'm afraid I couldn't do that. Other people would think it was for sale. But whenever you want to see it just come in and, if I'm not too busy, I'll show it to you.

Music (*Gay, transition*).

Peggy: When I told Mom, she was swell about it and promised, if I didn't let my homework slip, she'd fix it up with Dad. Mrs. Orram said she'd be glad to have me nights as well as weekends, and I was happier than I'd ever been in my life. Before I went to sleep, I prayed that Johnnie Carter would ask me to go to the Prom with him, or if that was too much to ask, would he at least ask me for one or two dances.

It's funny the way, when one thing happens it sort of starts other things. The next afternoon I stayed after school rather late finishing up my homework. Most everybody had gone home and the building was very quiet until . . .

Sound (*Running footsteps*).

Peggy: I heard someone running down the hall from the gym. I stepped outside the door and . . .

Johnnie: Ooops. Sorry!

Peggy: Johnnie Carter!

Johnnie (*Excitedly*): Have you seen the nurse around?

Peggy: No, I haven't. What's the matter with your hand?

Johnnie: Sprained wrist, I guess. I was looking for Miss Warren to tape it up for me.

Peggy: I think she's gone but I can do it.

Johnnie: You can?

Peggy: I'm an advanced first aider, and our kit's right here in Miss Decker's closet. Come on in.

Johnnie (*Groans*): It hurts like the dickens when I move it.

Peggy: Sit down and I'll get the kit.

Johnnie: I fell in the gym, jumping for a basket. Always was a graceful guy. (*Laughs uncomfortably*.)

Peggy: Let me see your hand.

Johnnie (*Groans in spite of himself*).

Peggy: I'm sorry. You'll have to see a doctor but I can bind it up for now. I'll try not to hurt.

Johnnie: That's all right. I can take it. (*Groans*.) I think. Good thing for me you happened to be around.

Peggy: For me too. I mean . . . we first aiders need an occasional victim to keep in practice.

Johnnie (*Surprised*): You seem to know just what to do, all right.

Peggy: Is that too tight?

Johnnie: I guess not. Act professional, too. You'd make a good nurse.

Peggy: That's what I want to be.

Johnnie: Really? That's swell. I'm going to enlist right after graduation. (*Laughs*.) Maybe some day I'll find myself lying in a hospital somewhere and look up and see you taking care of me.

Peggy (*Seriously*): I hope not.

Johnnie (*Laughs*): Well don't sound so serious about it. I think I'd like it.

Peggy (*Quickly*): I'm almost finished now.

Johnnie (*Disappointed*): Oh—are you? Say how about . . . are you going to the game tomorrow night? I mean—would you go with me, maybe?

Peggy: I'd love to but I'll be working.

Johnnie: Well, gosh, what's the matter with me? So will I. I just got a job as mechanic's helper down at the garage. Thought it'd come in handy if the Army lets me fly.

Peggy: There. That's as much as I can do. How does it feel?

Johnnie (*Laughs*): To tell the truth I can't feel anything, but it looks swell. Thanks.

Peggy: You will go to the doctor?

Johnnie: If you say so, nurse.

Peggy (*Laughs, a low, pleasant laugh*).

Johnnie: Hey do that again.

Peggy (*Laughs again*).

Johnnie (*Surprised*): When you laugh you look all—sort of sunshiny. (*Both laugh gaily*.)

Music (*Lilting, transition*).

Peggy: I didn't walk home—I floated. And I kept laughing to myself, remembering what he said. The next afternoon we did our home-

work together. That is, we did some of it. I didn't seem to get as much done as usual and had to finish the rest after work. Thursday, in history class, a note was passed along to me. When I saw it was from Johnnie I held it down under my desk and read . . .

Johnnie: I can't keep my mind on hist-or-y

Till you say you'll go to the Prom with me.

Peggy: I knew then how Mr. Rickenbacker must have felt when he prayed for food and that bird landed on his shoulder. With an evening gown and Johnnie Carter I wanted to hug the world.

The rest of that week was a dream. It seemed as though everybody was suddenly being nice to me. As though everything I'd ever wanted was happening all at once. I knew it would have to end but I never thought it would happen the way it did.

Four days before the Prom, Johnnie said he couldn't work with me after school. He had a Student Council meeting. So I was studying alone when Janie Barnes came in and started things happening.

Janie: Busy?

Peggy (*Gaily*): Not very. Why?

Janie: In a good mood, huh?

Peggy: Wonderful!

Janie: As if I didn't know why. With Johnnie Carter taking you to the Prom. Every gal in the school is green with envy.

Peggy: Oh, I hope not.

Janie: No, only one or two are green. They thought he'd ask them. The rest of us knew we never had a chance anyway and accepted our second fiddles long ago. What I wanted to ask you about was whether you were going to buy a War Savings bond this week?

Peggy: Oh, I don't think I can.

Janie: You haven't forgotten about our campaign? To buy enough bonds for a jeep before graduation.

Peggy: No, only I haven't got . . .

Janie: I know you don't have as much spending money as some of the kids but . . .

Peggy (*Hurt*): Oh.

Janie (*Miserable*): There I go putting my foot in it again. I just meant that . . . oh gosh! You know I didn't mean to hurt your feelings, Peggy. I guess (*fading*) you're buying as many stamps and bonds as you can.

Peggy: I was hurt, though. And a little bit angry, too. Why, I had as much money as anybody now that I was working. Wait till they saw my dress. My \$19.95 dress! From Landons! I went on with my homework and didn't think any more about it. That is—I didn't think I was thinking about it, but somehow the algebra I was doing kept coming out in the wrong answers.

Finally, I put down my pencil and faced it. I could buy a bond instead of the dress if I wanted to.

But I didn't want to, at all. Surely nobody would expect me to give up my dress. The government didn't need money that bad.

While I sat there thinking about it, Mr. Wilkins came in to clean up. He's the janitor and he's (*fading*) a very understanding old man.

Wilkins: Something's bothering you, Peggy Brown.

Peggy: How did you know?

Wilkins: Well, something's usually worrying you young fry, isn't it?

Peggy: I'm not really worried.

Wilkins: My father used to say you shouldn't tell other people your troubles because half of them didn't care anyway and the rest were darned glad to hear about it. (*Chuckles*.) But you young ones know you can always talk things over with me.

Peggy: My mind's made up. It's just that I wish I felt better about it.

Wilkins: Conscience troubles, eh?

Peggy: I don't know why it should be my conscience. I'm not doing anything wrong. And yet, the funny thing is, I feel almost as though I were.

Wilkins: Uh-huh. I'll just go on with my work, but I'm listening.

Sound (*Sweeping up and fade under*).

Peggy: I've been working nights and week-

ends to buy an evening dress. Johnnie Carter's taking me to the Prom and I've got to have it. But now, Janie . . .

Wilkins: Wants to know if you're going to buy a bond this week. (*Chuckles*.) Oh I know—she's been after me too.

Peggy: But you don't . . .

Wilkins: I don't make enough money to buy bonds. Is that what you were going to say?

Peggy: No, of course not.

Wilkins: Well, I don't. But I'm going to buy one anyway. I'll tell you something else. I've got four already. Four shares in America. Oh, I know I sound like the posters but I believe it. Sometimes, after my work's done, I sit down in the basement in my little room and I read your textbooks—American history, United States geography, stories of Lincoln and Jefferson. All those books tell me that I'm part of America. So I buy bonds. Maybe I have to give up the movies—and I like movies (*chuckles*) even the bad ones. Maybe I go without desserts now and then—and I have my sweet tooth. Perhaps I wear my shoes a little longer, and plant vegetables in my garden instead of flowers. But when I come to school every morning I can still raise the American flag, and hear you students sing our American songs.

Peggy (*Uncertainly*): Then—maybe you think I shouldn't buy the dress.

Wilkins (*Slowly*): I wouldn't exactly say that.

Peggy: I want to help win the war and I'm planning to be a nurse soon as I graduate and get trained. All I want is this one thing—just this dress—before I get into the war too. After I get it, I'll put all the money I earn into bonds, do anything they want me to. But I can't give up my dress.

Wilkins: I see how you feel, Peggy girl. And I think it's fine of you to train for a nurse and plan to save the money you make later.

Peggy (*Sadly*): But you don't think it's enough.

Wilkins (*Sighs*): The trouble is, wars won't wait for tomorrow. They keep right on swallowing up dollars and lives with every tick of the clock. It's what we do each minute of the day that helps win.

Peggy (*Trying to be hard about it*): Well, maybe it is, but I just can't give up my dress.

Wilkins: I don't say you're wrong. You're the only one who can know what to do 'cause you're the only one who can weigh what a bond means to the war against what the dress means to you.

Peggy: It means so awfully much to me, Mr. Wilkins. I've gone without things all my life and now—I seventeen years old! The most important time in a girl's life. My family's always had to scratch and I've never asked more than my share from them, but now that I have a chance to earn some money for myself why should I have to give up what I want so much?

Wilkins: That's a hard question, Peggy girl. (*Thoughtfully*.) Maybe the answer's because other folks are giving up things they want—to fight for us. Folks all over the world. Folks that have a lot and folks that have almost nothing. Sometimes I see their pictures in the paper and I cut them out and put them on my wall so they can remind me. And when I want something I look at those pictures to see if I should have it. Maybe you'd like to see a couple I cut out today. Got 'em right here in my pocket.

Peggy: No—think I better finish my homework.

Wilkins: Won't take a minute to look at 'em. This one here's a Russian girl. Some kind of a nurse like you're going to be. See?

Peggy: I really have to do my algebra, Mr. Wilkins.

Wilkins: She's giving up some things. No home, no family, risking her life every day. Just about your age, too. Then there's this boy, here. Got his picture out of a magazine somebody threw in the waste basket. Says here, "Wounded marine from Guadalcanal recuperating at Army hospital." Guess he's given up a few things, too, from the looks of him. And

he don't seem much older than young Johnnie Carter, does he?

Peggy: I don't know. I—I don't want to look at him, Mr. Wilkins.

Wilkins: No? Well . . . was that somebody calling me out in the hall?

Peggy: I didn't hear anything.

Wilkins: I'll just go see. Here, I'll prop these pictures up against the black-board and you can look at 'em while I'm gone. Maybe (fading) they'll help you decide.

Peggy: No! Take them with you. I've got to finish my homework! Mr. Wilkins . . .

Music (*Up and fade under*).

Peggy: I pretended to do my algebra but something kept pulling my eyes up toward the pictures. I had to look at them. The Russian girl had a sort of sweet face and the wounded marine was smiling. They looked very real, especially their eyes, and it frightened me to look at them. I put my head down on my arms to shut them out but I kept seeing them anyway and before I knew it I was crying. I must have cried quite a while. I don't remember, really. Maybe I fell asleep or maybe I just imagined it all but pretty soon I heard them speaking to me. Their voices seemed to be coming from far away at first and straining to reach me. Then the girl's voice sounded clearer and finally it was right there in the room with me.

Music (*Turning mystic up and out under*).
Russian I (*Soft, sweet voice*): So you are going to be a nurse.

Peggy (*Timidly*): Yes.

Russian I: I am a feldscher.

Peggy: What that?

Russian I: That's our Russian word for medical attendant. There are over 400,000 of us and half are women. We work on the battlefields beside our soldiers.

Peggy: That must be very dangerous.

Russian I: It is dangerous. But we, in Russia, have learned that the greatest danger is doing nothing. So each does what he can. Nurses are much needed. Everywhere. It is good that you plan to be one soon. But things are needed now, too, and that is why I talk to you.

Peggy: You think, like Mr. Wilkins, that I should buy a bond instead of my dress.

Russian I: I think we must win this horrible war as quickly as possible and that we must look at each thing we do to see if it helps.

Peggy: But there is so little time. You see this is my first dance and it's the last one, too. Johnnie will be going into the Army and . . . it seems to me the dress would help me so much more than a bond could possibly help the war.

Russian I: Maybe that's because you don't know how much a bond would help.

Peggy: But the war costs billions. How much good could my little \$18.75 do?

Russian I: I don't know how much that is in Russian money but I'm sure it would buy bandages and first aid kits. Or maybe a couple of entrenching shovels. Oh, if I could only show you, if you could only see how important those little things are. I learned my first day on the battlefield . . .

Sound (*Battle noises up and down under*).

Russian I: I was told to stay with an experienced feldscher and observe her work. We were in the front lines and soon a soldier fell about twenty-five yards from us. I crawled, with her, to the wounded man (fading) dragging my entrenching shovel with me . . .

Sound (*Battle noises up briefly then fade low under*).

Soldier (*Groans*).

Russian II: Dig quickly while I give him first aid.

Sound (*Hurried digging*).

Russian II: Pile the dirt in front of us so we'll be protected.

Russian I: Is he . . . ?

Russian II: Torn arm, lacerated head. Watch the treatment but don't stop digging.

Soldier (*Fading groan*).

Russian II: He's unconscious now. We must work quickly. An inexperienced one might try

to take him at once to the doctors at the evacuation post but a feldscher knows better.

Russian I: First comes first aid.

Russian II: Correct. Time and life are wasted carrying a man back to the post who may bleed to death on the way. You may stop digging now. We're safe enough.

Sound (*Digging out*).

Russian II: The medicine in this kit, these bandages I'm applying may save his life now by stopping the flow of blood.

Russian I: And keeping germs out of the wound.

Russian II: Yes, that too is very important. There. He's ready to be taken back.

Russian I: May I carry him?

Russian II: You might as well start now. Get him on your back as gently as possible.

Russian I (*Grunts*): Like this?

Russian II: Good. Now we crawl back to the post where the doctors can take care of him.

Sound (*Battle noises up then out under*).

Peggy: You carry them on your back? But they must be terribly heavy?

Russian I: We Russian girls are strong and the wounded men are not so heavy as our wounded hearts. Ninety-eight and one-half per cent of our wounded men recover, and most of them return to battle. We know it is partly because of such little things as entrenching shovels which make shelters for us to work in, and bandages and first aid kits for us to work with.

Peggy (*Wonderingly*): And one little bond would buy those things.

Russian I: There are no little things in war. Each smallest thing is part of something bigger that couldn't exist without it. War makes you angry and you feel you want to do big things, but you soon learn that most important are the little things (fading) that you do along with everyone else.

Music (*Mystic, up and out behind*).

Peggy: Don't go! I want to ask you . . .

Music (*Still mystic, but different theme, fades out under*).

Marine: Ask me.

Peggy: You?

Marine: Yeah. The wounded marine from Guadalcanal. I can tell you lots about the war. Just ask me.

Peggy: I don't think I want to hear any more.

Marine: You mean you've decided to buy the bond?

Peggy: I . . . I'm thinking about it.

Marine: If you're still thinking about it, you ought to hear some more.

Peggy: No . . . please.

Marine: Let me tell you about Guadalcanal. Talking about that place is the only way I can remember it's real. You go out there to fight the Japs. And you do, all right. They're sniping at you from every tree and bush. But pretty quick you discover they're not the only things you're fighting. You got the rain, soaking into you till you're oozing. And along with that you got the mud, sucking at your feet. Then you got the mosquitoes, millions of them, biting your face and swelling you up 'til you don't look human. And malaria—from the mosquitoes. Well, the boys down there aren't beefing. They've got a job to do and it being in some hole Satan dreamed up don't keep them from doing it. But let me tell you, fighting in a place like that costs money. Lots of it. Money for fighting the Japs and money for fighting all those other things too. So don't waste time thinking, sister.

Peggy: But you're a man. You don't understand how much a dress means to a girl.

Marine: Do you need it to keep warm?

Peggy: No, it's not my body that needs it. It's my—my spirit.

Marine: Listen, in peace time maybe it was o.k. to worry about luxuries like cold spirits but, in war, all you need clothes for is cold bodies. Maybe I'm just wasting my time trying to tell a girl there's something more important in the world than a dress but I'll try anyway. The way I see it's this way: buying a dress you don't need costs more than money you could loan the government. It costs human lives be-

cause it makes the war last longer. Buying a bond, that is needed, will shorten the war and save lives.

Peggy: Not just one \$25 bond.

Marine: Just one \$25 bond will buy two wool army blankets for cold bodies, or five new pairs of shoes for marching feet, or six steel helmets to ward off death from shrapnel. It could say to a guerrilla fighter hiding behind thick bushes (fading) somewhere in Yugoslavia . . .

Peggy: I know you, too, are helping to win this war for me. Here's 42 clips of bullets. I bought them for you instead of a dress.

Guerrilla: Forty-two clips of bullets! Let me see! Let me touch them!

Peggy: Will they help?

Guerrilla (*Laughs*): Will they help? Yes! They speak the one language a Nazi understands. And they shall carry a message at once. Look through these leaves . . . see the road winding below us there?

Peggy: Yes. Some motorcycles and a car are coming along it.

Guerrilla (*With hatred*): Nazis.

Sound (*Of bullets being put in gun*).

Guerrilla: They come nearer. And now! your bullets speak!

Sound (*Gunfire up loud then fading out*).

Marine: One \$25 bond could buy 10 hand grenades for long-suffering Chinese or bayonets for 3 Canadian Commandoes, or life rings for three torpedoed sailors. It could buy a winter flying jacket for a British bombardier dropping "messages" over the Ruhr.

Peggy: And they're important, too, like the bandages and shovels.

Marine: Everything's important to the soldier who needs it. It's what will keep him fighting and give him the chance to come back home to the place he's keeping free. And speaking of coming home, there's something else your bond could say. Something pleasant. After the war, the thing we soldiers are going to want most is jobs, like the President said. Your bond could help give them to us. After the final peace is won, that bond would let you walk into a store and say . . .

Peggy: I want to buy that beautiful dress in the window. The silk one with the lace trimming.

Marine: Only it would probably be made of nylon or spun glass or something. Everything's going to be new and better after the war. Or maybe you'd prefer to stop at the automobile showroom . . .

Peggy: I want to make a down payment on that stunning, streamlined car that does forty miles to a gallon and costs only \$300.

Marine: Or the radio store . . .

Peggy: I'd like to see your combination radio, F. M. and television set.

Marine: And by buying those things you'd be making jobs! Think of it! You'd be saying to some soldier—to your friend, Johnnie Carter, maybe . . .

Peggy: During the war when things were scarce I bought War Bonds. Now when business is normal again, I have it to spend and can help make jobs for people.

Marine: That'll be a world worth saving and worth saving for. The way I see it, this really is a total war. Maybe it's hard for some Americans to realize because they haven't been bombed out of their homes or shot as hostages or hauled to enemy countries for enforced labor. But civilians are part of the war just the same. You're depending on us soldiers to win this war. And we will. But we're depending on you to win something for us too. The peace, and part of the peace we want is jobs. So we can start living for democracy instead of dying for it.

Music (*Mystic up loud*).

Peggy (*Over*): Wait!

Music (*Fades out under*).

Wilkins: Well! Still sitting here thinking?

Peggy (*Startled*): Oh! It's you, Mr. Wilkins. The strangest thing . . . I must have fallen asleep—or something. (*Hurriedly*) Now I've got to go. I've got to hurry. (*Fading*) Goodbye.



Scene from the production of *The Eve of St. Mark* as staged by Hite Wilson Compton at the Huntington, West Virginia, High School (Thespian Troupe No. 295). See article on next page.

Wilkins (*Chuckles*): Goodbye.

Music (*Up brief and out under*).

Saleslady: I suppose you've come to get your dress.

Peggy (*Breathless*): No, I . . . I've decided to buy a War Savings Bond instead. That is . . . if I can have my five dollars deposit back.

Saleslady: You mean you're buying a bond instead of the dress?

Peggy: I've thought it all out and I guess it's the only thing to do.

Saleslady: Well . . . I think that's wonderful! You certainly can have your money back. It's right here in this drawer.

Peggy: I'm very sorry for all the inconvenience I've caused you.

Saleslady: That's quite all right, honey. We won't have any trouble selling this dress.

Peggy (*Sadly*): I suppose not. I wonder—could I—could I see it just once more.

Saleslady: It's right here in this closet.

Sound (*Door opened*).

Peggy: I guess it was too beautiful for me. (*Sighs deeply*.)

Saleslady: You're doing the right thing, my dear. A fine thing. And, after the war is over there'll be dresses even more beautiful than this.

Peggy: You think so?

Saleslady: I know it. And you'll have one. Now if you hurry you may be able to get your bond over at the post office before they close.

Music (*Up and out under*).

Peggy: I got the bond and walked home with it slowly. At first I felt kind of noble, giving up that wonderful dress for a piece of paper. Then I thought of what those voices had said and I felt humble. Then that passed and I felt sad, because I had made up my mind that I couldn't disgrace Johnnie by going in a borrowed dress. The next afternoon (*fading*) after school . . .

Peggy: I can't stay tonight, Johnnie.

Johnnie: Gee, I didn't see you last night either.

Peggy: I had to make some decisions.

Johnnie: There isn't anything wrong is there?

Peggy: No, but—I can't go to the Prom with you.

Johnnie: I don't get it. Something is wrong. Have I done anything?

Peggy (*Almost crying*): I can't talk about it, Johnnie—please. (*Fading*.) Goodbye.

Johnnie: Peggy! Wait a minute!

Music (*Up and fades out under*).

Peggy: I stayed home from school the next day. I told Mom I didn't feel well and that wasn't any lie. I was miserable. But the real reason was that I couldn't face everybody talking about the Prom, and Johnnie. Just thinking about it made me feel sorry for myself and get weepy. Mom didn't want me to go to work that night but I insisted. The dollar and a half I'd make would buy more War Savings Stamps and I knew, now, how important they were. About 10 o'clock, just as I was (*fading*) leaving the delicatessen . . .

Johnnie: Hello, wonderful!

Peggy: Johnnie!

Johnnie: Well, if it isn't wonderful for a girl to give up a dress for a War Bond, I'd like to know what is.

Peggy: How did you find out?

Johnnie: Mr. Wilkins. I was spilling my troubles to him—about you turning me down for the Prom—and he said he guessed he knew what was wrong and I made him tell me. I think it was a swell thing to do, Peggy. And you're going to the dance, too.

Peggy: But I can't Johnnie. You see . . .

Johnnie: You don't have to worry about any old evening gown 'cause the dance is to be informal. We decided it at a Prom Committee meeting this afternoon. Boys never like formals anyway.

Peggy: But the girls will be furious.

Johnnie: The funny thing is, they're not. We were kind of worried about that but it seems you started something and the other gals figure

they can be just as patriotic as anybody else. Some of them weren't getting new dresses anyway and several of those who were said they'd take them back and get refunds so they could buy bonds, too. (*With mock formality*.) As president of the Student Council, I wish to congratulate you for the fine example you've set.

Peggy: I still think the other girls will hate me.

Johnnie: Well, maybe feminine nature has undergone a sudden change but they're going to present you with a corsage, befitting the star of the evening.

Peggy: A corsage!

Johnnie: Of War Savings stamps—one contributed by each member of the class. Now laugh, will you?

Peggy (*Laughs, almost crying*).

Johnnie: More.

Peggy (*Laughs happily*).

Johnnie: Did I tell you how sunshiny you look when you laugh? (*Both laugh*.)

Music (*Up and fade under*).

Peggy: So that's my story. The Prom couldn't have been more wonderful if I'd had the dress. Everybody said it was the nicest dance we'd ever had and Janie announced that we'd raised enough money for our jeep and three machine guns besides. Giving up something for the war *does* make you feel good—especially when everybody's in it together. And when you ask yourself, every time you do something, if it's helping to win the war—well, you certainly start doing different things.

Announcer: You have been listening to a story presented by . . . High School. The part of Peggy was played by . . . Music was furnished by . . . was Johnnie, . . . Mr. Wilkins, . . . the Marine, . . . the first Russian feldscher and . . . the second Russian girl, . . . the guerrilla, and . . . Janie Barnes. The play was under the direction of . . .

Staging the High School Play

This department is designed to assist teachers in choosing, casting, and producing plays at the high school level. Suggestions as to plays which should be discussed next or how this department may be of greater assistance to teachers will be welcomed.

Edited by EARL W. BLANK

Thespian Senior Councilor and Director of Dramatics at Berea College, Berea, Ky.

The Eve Of St. Mark

By HITE WILSON COMPTON

(As produced and directed by Hite Wilson Compton at the Huntington, W. Va., High School.)

The Eve of St. Mark, a play in two acts, by Maxwell Anderson. Modern Costume. 13 men, 8 women. The present version has been simplified for use in high schools by Christopher Sergel. Royalty, \$40.00. The Dramatic Publishing Company, 59 East Van Buren Street, Chicago, Illinois.

Suitability

THE EVE OF ST. MARK is a play crystalized from the American phase of the present war. The story is simple and might be the history of any young soldier. The characters are types of people stemming from various sections of our country, yet all revealing the essence of a common American pattern. In locale the play is divided into two sections: One re-creates life at home, the other discloses the stirring and hearty activities of army life. This division provides the audience with rich emotional experiences. There is the quiet moving appeal of the home scenes, the quickened hilarity of army life and the throat-tightening flashes of heroism which break through the quiet and the rowdiness with sudden poignancy. The last curtain closes leaving the audience warmed by a renewed faith in the essential and simple dignity of men who fight to keep others free.

The simplified version of *The Eve of St. Mark* is a good high school play. The heavy demands of scenery and scene changing found in the original script have been eliminated through the substitution of a single set of curtains. The love scenes have been somewhat toned down, so that they are entirely within the emotional scope of the high school actor. The pungent army spade-calling has been skillfully deleted, leaving the language just as colorful and without danger of offense to a high school audience. But the fact that it presents a situation that is real, that it deals primarily with the ability of the youth of America to cope with that reality, contributes most effectively to its suitability.

Plot and Staging

A simple and touching love story binds the many scenes of the play together. It serves as a single strand upon which the more important elements of theme, mood, and character are fabricated. There is no well defined plot but the love story of Quizz and Janet epitomizes the purpose of the playwright. Through it he reveals his theme.

The first scene shows Deck West and his wife, Nell, waiting for their son, Quizz, who is returning from the army for a short furlough.

MRS. HITE WILSON COMPTON

It is a pleasure to introduce Mrs. Compton to the readers of these pages. Her intensely interesting writeup of the Christopher Sergel simplified adaptation of this ever-popular play makes consideration of this production for future use well worth serious study. Surely the play is exceptionally apt now.

Quizz had mentioned in a letter he was bringing someone of importance for them to meet. The someone proves to be Janet Feller, a neighbor girl whom he hopes to marry after the war. Nell and Deck happily receive her into the family, but his younger brothers, Zip and Neil, laconically remark, "Looks like we lost the best brother we ever had."

The next scene moves to a camp somewhere in the South. Quizz is one of a raucous group of soldiers which includes, Tate, a corporal; Shelvin, Glinka, and Mulveroy, noisy privates. The latter is the loud comic of the lot. The group is joined by Private Marion, a soft spoken, oratorical Southerner, in constant debt to the others. This is one of the funniest scenes of the show. In it Mulveroy impersonates their tough top kick, Sergeant Ruby, who quietly arrives to observe the whole proceedings.

Scene III returns to the West kitchen. It is very short, but for the audience it fuses Quizz, the soldier, into Quizz, the farm lad and lover, by showing a waiting family interested in his army experiences and his soldier buddies.

Scene IV takes place in a restaurant where the soldiers come to find relaxation. Glinka and Mulveroy have discovered two girls of rather obvious charm who are waiting for Sergeants Ruby and Kriven. They are intent upon preventing this rendezvous when the girls cast appreciative eyes upon Quizz and Marion who are quietly sitting at another table. Mulveroy and Glinka bow out in defeat leaving the girls to concentrate their wiles upon handsome, serious Quizz and poetry-quoting Marion. This scene highlights the implication of the waiting family. Neither loneliness nor the willing propinquity of Lil and Sal can exorcise the firm influence of a loving family and sweetheart.

In the next scene Quizz is home on leave. The family sit comfortably around the kitchen table listening to him talk. Nell finally breaks up the laughing circle so that Quizz and Janet may be alone—alone to rediscover the wonder of their love, to reaffirm their mutual faith and yearning. "And I'll tell you the truth, Janet, if it hadn't been for you, I could have got mixed up in all sorts of things. But, darling, I just used you for a North Star and I steered straight for you as fast I could come. A fellow hangs on to somebody the way he hangs on to life." The phone rings. Quizz answers and talks for a few minutes. He hangs up slowly without looking toward Janet. "There's been a mix-up. I must catch the 2 o'clock train." Janet realizes this is his last leave. She says to him, "There's no use being angry—and no use holding you back, because you just have to go." He answers, "I just have to go. And I think I should." He hurries out, leaving Janet her arms outstretched gazing after him.

The opening scene of Act II is played in semi-darkness. A number of overseas packs are piled at center stage. The muffled roar of the ocean, mingled with an occasional boat whistle is heard in the background. A faint light catches the familiar faces of the group of soldiers as they wait to go on the boat. It is only an interlude to catch the imagination of the

audience and to set the more serious mood of Act II. Out of the darkness comes Quizz's familiar voice, "Would you mail a letter, Sergeant?" And the audience is instantly moved by the transcendent desire of all men to "hang on" in face of the vast unknown.

Scene II returns to the family who listens to Janet read the letter mailed by the Sergeant. Each home scene, though fragmentary, contributes to the deepening purpose of the ultimate heroism and sacrifice of Quizz and his soldier comrades.

In Scene III the soldiers have been occupying for some time an island somewhere in the Pacific. Mulveroy and Marion are ill with malaria. All of the group show the strain of heavy fatigue and fever as they wearily wait for Kriven who has gone in an outrigger to a neighboring island to obtain relief for a position made hopeless by lack of rations and sufficient ammunition. Glinka writes a letter. Mulveroy asks the date. Tate produces an almanac. He discovers it is the Eve of St. Mark. All listen quietly, their minds far away at home, as he reads. "On St. Mark's Eve, if a virgin stands at the church door at dusk, she will see entering the church door all those of the parish who are to die that year. If her lover should enter among the others, he will turn and look at her, may perhaps speak." Soon Kriven appears with an order from the headquarters sector which permits them to evacuate the untenable island, but which also implies a plea to hold on. The scene ends with the impact of the emotional conflict wrought by that order.

Quizz's voice is heard in the darkness of Scene IV calling Janet. She answers. A light upon the face of each reveals them as they talk across space and time to bring true the legend of St. Mark.

The final scene of the show finds the family restive and anxious for news of Quizz. Janet finally tells of her dream and the certainty it brings that he won't come home. And she explains, "I love him terribly, but—if they'd left the islands they'd have been defeated—in their own hearts—and when they stayed there, that was a Victory." Thus the play ends on a note of ultimate triumph through personal sacrifice.

Casting

THE cast of this show includes a variety of satisfying parts. Even the minor roles offer a chance for creative characterization. The family group consists of Deck and Nell West, about forty-five years of age; their sons, Neil and Zip, who are eighteen and sixteen respectively; Cy, a lean old neighbor of fifty; Ralph, Deck's older brother; and Janet, the pretty girl who loves Quizz, the oldest son. These are simple steady people who possess a love of life strengthened by patience and a tough composure. In the part of Cy there is a chance to develop a bit role into a richly amusing part. Janet and Quizz are young and attractive, but experienced actors should be used; actors who have the ability to suggest an undertone of deep feeling. The moving simplicity of their love scenes is difficult to achieve.

In casting the soldiers it proves effective to vary quality and pitch of voice as much as possible, for in several of the scenes played in semi-darkness it is voice which sustains the identity of the characters and helps to establish the mood of the scene. Repeatedly, they must be heard over the roar of cannon, through the beat of the ocean, under the drone of planes.

Mulveroy, the stocky Irish comic, can be easily over-played. The same chance for over-exaggeration is true in portray-

ing Marion, a handsome southern with equally handsome manners. There are exacting acting demands placed upon him in the delirium of his island scenes. Ruby, the weather-beaten old-line sergeant presents a problem in diction. He speaks with a Brooklyn accent which, when added to the strident inflection of one used to giving commands is apt to transform speech into blurred sounds. The parts of Lil and Sal should add color to olive drab and offer a striking contrast to the quiet charm of Janet. They might be played by twin girls or by two girls who closely resemble each other. Although their appeal is devoid of publicity, they must remain attractive. They are not "toughies."

Direction

THE simplified setting for this play will prove a boon to directors, but this very simplification requires greater stress upon mood, tempo, and authentic characterization. The director will find that he must paint his scene with light and sound rather than pigment, that mood must be established without the aid of realistic setting and largely through the magic of acting. The skill of playwright, of course, makes this possible. But to this skill must be added the highlights of effective grouping, rich tone effects and varied pace.

The emotional implications of the play run a wide gamut of appeal. The director, therefore, must motivate a constantly changing tempo. The swift action of Scene 2, Act I, is followed by a quiet scene with the family. There must be moments of suspended action, moments of effect rather than movement. The curtain rises in Scene 1, Act II, to reveal a picture. The lights are dim, only the sound of the ocean is heard and the outline of waiting soldiers remains immobile. Pauses such as this contain strong dramatic value.

With only a few simple properties to suggest locale, emphasis must be placed upon authentic characterization. Nell must move about a farm kitchen with such reality of action that she creates the feel of that kitchen. The sagging weary bodies of the soldiers, their tired voices tightened by the strain of war, must translate the reality of the island to the audience. Then, too, the scenes are short. Distinct characters must be immediately established with a vividness of appeal that will sustain the interruption of an entirely different scene. The lovely simplicity of Janet felt in the opening scene must carry through the hilarity of Scene 2 to be instantly recaptured in her reappearance in Scene 3. Sincere emotion sharpened by voice differences and emphasized with distinct personality traits should be stressed by the director if the multi-strands of the play are to be woven into the purposeful design of the author.

Stage Problems

THE *Eve of St. Mark* offers few staging problems. A set of neutral-colored

Reserve Drill for Army

"The amount of military drill which can be given in schools and colleges can also be given after induction into the Army, in a relatively short period of time, and under the most productive circumstances. A good physical condition, however, cannot be developed in so short space of time, and the physical condition of a soldier is of prime importance to the War Department.

"The War Department does not want to appear to advise upon the make-up of the curriculum, nor to go beyond outlining some of the elements which the Army believes would be advantageous in its recruits. Of these, a good physical condition is extremely important and a knowledge of basic military drill relatively unimportant.

"The War Department therefore does not recommend that military drill take the place of physical education in the schools and colleges during this war period."—Secretary of War Stimson.

curtains will serve as a background for all the scenes. Only essential furnishings are used. For example, in the scene in Nell West's kitchen, only a table and chairs and a kitchen cabinet are necessary. This scene requires a small playing area so those few pieces can be grouped at center stage and fairly close to the footlights. There is broader movement as well as more furnishings used in the restaurant scene, so a larger playing area must be utilized. This is also true of the scenes on the island, where the action calls for more space. For these scenes a large set piece representing a rock must be built.

We had on hand a wooden platform, about 18 feet in width and 12 feet in length. To this platform was added a wooden, upright frame which transformed the whole structure into a triangle. Two pieces of plywood were attached to the front of the platform which allowed two persons to sit in a reclining position. The whole structure was covered with layers of brown wrapping paper. The paper was then crinkled and punched until the rock looked like a jagged formation which sloped upward from a flat portion. A base coat of gray pigment mottled with dark blue, green and purple finished the process, and under the illusion of light this glimsy piece became a creviced rock.

In each scene specific illumination was used to pick out the playing area. Special records for the sound effects were utilized. These included the harbor noise in Act I, Scene 1, the sound effects used in the island scenes, and the voice over the radio. Information concerning these records can be obtained from the publisher of the play.

Costuming

THE characters of the home scenes wore farm clothing; overalls and work

shirts for the men, simple house dresses and aprons for Nell. Janet was more tastefully attired, but simplicity was also stressed in her costumes.

The soldiers' uniforms included helmets, overseas caps and barrack bags. In the scenes on the island their costumes were dirty and torn. We used kaki slacks that could be mistreated. Our assumption was that soldiers under the hardships of the tropics become not only dishevelled, but informal in appearance.

Lil and Sal were dressed alike in flowered chintz. Perky pink flowers were sewn together to form small hats. The whole effect was pretty upon their decided blondness and at the same time made them appear to be wearing a little too much of everything. Pepita, the young Filipino girl of the island scenes, wore a wrap-around skirt of bright material and a simple white blouse.

Makeup

DECK, Nell, Cy, and Ralph must give the appearance of maturity. A few lines and shadows were added to a medium base. Ralph was given gray hair while Nell and Deck were slightly touched with gray at the temples. We darkened the base used on the soldiers to give them a ruddy, out-door look. For the island scenes their faces were smudged with grime and we added fatigue lines. Marion and Mulveroy, ill with malaria, were given hollow cheeks and eyes. A dark tan base was used on Pepita.

Budget

TOTAL cost: under \$90.00.

Royalty and costumes will offer the heaviest expense. All costumes were loaned to us, thereby keeping our production cost low.

Publicity

THE timeliness of the play, plus the fact that it won a current Broadway success, gave *The Eve of St. Mark* great audience appeal. A school made conscious of the war effort through an active Victory Corps was anxious to see a play dealing with soldiers' experiences. Newspaper stories and posters emphasized the ideas mentioned above and one assembly program was devoted to a preview of some of the scenes.

Educational Results

NOW more than ever it should be the task of education to translate the restive emotions of our youth into purposeful activity. We must make them feel sure that freedom is worth the sacrifice they will be called upon to make. The stirring theme of this play offers them a faith to hold on to. Through the beauty and passions of *The Eve of St. Mark* actors and audience alike will find emotional sublimation and a shining motive for these dark days.

(Next Issue: *The Fighting Littles*.)

THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN

The Technician's Roundtable

Conducted by A. S. GILLETTE

Technical Director, University Theatre, State University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa

Question: A number of inquiries have come to my desk that are in essence asking the same question: How can we design attractive, practical settings that can be built at little cost, that can be shifted easily, and that will make a small stage look spacious?

Answer: At first glance such a composite question would likely evoke but a single response from many designers, "It can't be done!" An answer such as that is partially justified, for these designers realize that what might prove a highly satisfactory solution in one set of circumstances may be all wrong in another situation. A moment's thought by anyone who has ever been back stage in more than one theatre is enough to make them appreciate this fact and to recognize the wide differences existing in size, shape, arrangement and equipment.

Designing scenery for the theatre is essentially a tailor-made job; designs must not only be expressive of the play it serves, but it also must be adapted and fitted to the theatre in which it will be used. Recognizing this basic requirement of scene designing is a "must" towards effective staging of any production. However, it is possible to design attractive, low cost, easily shifted scenery that will have a tendency to make a small stage appear larger by resorting to a style in design that, because of these very qualities, is finding its way onto more and more of our stages. This style of design is known by a variety of names, being called simplified realism, suggestive realism, conditional realism, fragmentary realism, minimized scenery, impressionism, as well as others.

In principle as well as practice this style of design is basically sound. It proposes to abandon the completely done realistic setting in preference for a setting that is *suggestive* of reality. To state it more directly, it permits a part to stand for the whole. In general, these suggestive settings are played against a neutral background, usually black draperies, no effort being made to light any part of the stage except that actually used by the actors within the confines of the setting.

One of the best methods of approaching a design with the idea of simplifying it is to ask yourself what parts of this setting are unessential to the business of the play. This would automatically eliminate the ceiling, certain sections of the wall areas and those architectural features that were not actually needed to help establish the country, locale and the period in which the play is laid. This elimination

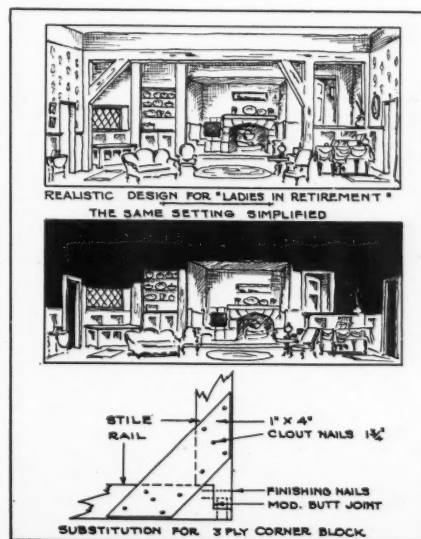
of certain features of a realistic design cannot be done in a haphazard fashion without running the risk of an arrangement on stage that lacks unity, hence considerable attention must be given to the matter of composition. The fact that the setting is suggestive, rather than completely realistic, is enough to draw the attention of the audience to it with the result that they are likely to be more conscious of its arrangement of color, line, form and mass.

Those who have not staged productions in this manner will be pleasantly surprised how readily an audience will accept this medium. Its advantages are both obvious and numerous:

- The amount of building materials and the cost are greatly reduced.
- The man hours required for construction and painting are reduced.
- It permits the handling of a many set show on stages limited as to space.
- Since the size and number of units are reduced it facilitates easy shifting and storage.
- Because the scale of the design is reduced and the setting no longer covers the entire stage area, it has the tendency to make the stage appear larger.

Question: Now that we can no longer get $\frac{1}{4}$ " fir veneer from which to make our corner blocks and keystones, how would you suggest that our flats be constructed.

Answer: You might try ordering your cornerblocks and keystones from some theatrical supply house. It is quite possible that some of them may have a reserve stock from which they can supply you. Should this possibility prove fruitless there are several joints that can be substituted for the butt joint reinforced by corner blocks. The mortise and tenon or the halved joints are both stronger than the butt joint but require considerable more time to construct. A modified butt joint can be used that is reinforced with a short length of 1"x4" that is battened over the butt joint with $1\frac{3}{4}$ " clout nails or $1\frac{1}{2}$ " screws. Refer to the accompanying sketch for details of this joint.



Boon for Schools

High school and college theatricals as well as professionals have an extensive library of sound effects to draw from in the new list of the Thomas J. Valentino, Inc., schedule which includes ten sides of effects rich with records of modern motif. They include the gaiety of peacetime with the glamor of amusement resorts, the crash of bowling balls, the click of the billiard game and the always popular street sounds of the gay nineties.

Thomas J. Valentino, president of the "Major" sound effect studios, says that these records, all ready for immediate delivery, afford any dramatic group the very latest in sound creations.

Question: How can we construct an inexpensive movable ceiling for standard interior settings?

Answer: The answer to your question is the standard so-called, "Roll Ceiling." Its cost is little, the construction and rigging are simple, and it may be taken apart and rolled into a compact bundle, hence its name, Roll Ceiling. Be sure to plan the ceiling large enough to cover the majority of your settings.

It is well to allow at least a 2 foot overhang on each side of your average set width. This will allow sufficient ceiling to cover ordinary jogs, alcoves and baywindow effects in the side walls of your setting. Some adjustment of the ceiling can be made by shoving it to the left or right with a stage brace as it is being moved onto a setting. The depth of the ceiling is usually kept at about 6" over the average depth of your setting. Remember the ceiling is usually held back from the tormentor line by 1'-6" to permit the bridge lights access into the setting.

The outer frame of a roll ceiling is made of 1"x4", the lengthwise battens being scarf jointed together. The two outside cross battens parallel the sight line limits of your theatre which results in the downstage lengthwise batten being longer than the upper. The inner cross battens are made of 1"x3". All cross battens are fastened to the lengthwise battens by means of a special ceiling plate that can be obtained from any theatrical supply house. By removing the one $\frac{3}{8}$ " carriage bolt and wing nut from each ceiling plate, the entire frame work can be taken apart in a matter of moments. The covering material may be either canvas or heavy muslin sewn into one piece with the seams running parallel with the lengthwise battens. Glue and tack this material to the lengthwise battens only. The covering material should be cut about 30" longer than the length of the frame so that half of this excess material can be folded in a heavy hem and pulled up on top of the outer cross battens where it is temporarily tacked. To strike this ceiling remove all tacks from cross battens, remove cross battens from lengthwise battens and roll the covering material around one lengthwise batten paint side in. A ceiling, 32' long by 15' by 28', unpainted would cost \$25.00 at present prices.

Exercises in Dramatics

by FRANCES COSGROVE

Bittersweet Lane, Scarsdale, N. Y.

Author of *Scenes For Student Actors*, Volume I-V, published by Samuel French.

Underplaying

UNDERPLAYING is a type of acting that has gained favor rapidly in recent years. In earlier days when theatres were large and acoustics poor, actors tended to rant and stalk about the stage at great length. Lately so-called "realistic" plays have become popular through employing a more natural presentation. English actors have undoubtedly contributed largely to this change because their technique is on the whole more highly polished than ours. In underplaying, the actor must exercise great restraint particularly in the more dramatic scenes. He feels the scene intensely and he conveys this feeling across the footlights through the skillful use of his voice which he has under complete control because his body is at perfect ease. The effectiveness of underplaying is achieved by withholding heroic gestures and shouting and concentrating on a free and easy delivery and a flexible body.

Uncle Harry*

BY THOMAS JOB

There is nothing an audience enjoys more than to be let in on a secret. It is one of the surest forms of audience appeal—for they become, in effect, conspirators. The actor who plays a part of this type must assume a role of dual personality. Uncle Harry plays a part to the characters in the play while he is displaying to the audience a second side of his nature. No brassy histrionics are needed to project this. The quiet, even flow of normal conversation will take care of it.

To the world Harry is a very plain and kindly person devoted to his two unmarried sisters. The audience soon begins to sense that this vapid little man is in rebellion against these shrewish women who prevented his marriage and who dominate his life. In the following scene Hester has retired after one of her frequent quarrels with her sister. As is customary, Uncle Harry tries to effect a reconciliation between them. But this time he has had the foresight to have Lettie purchase a bottle of poison—she thought for the dog.

Uncle Harry: Poor Uncle Harry! I do get sympathy, there's no denying it. (*Picks up poison and puts it in his pocket.*) Poor Uncle Harry! Lettie, why don't you make peace with your sister? (*Harry says this in an amicable way.*)

Lettie: Peace! There'll never be any peace with her around. (*Rises; crosses down left.*)
Uncle Harry (*Crossing to her*): There may be—if you do what I ask.

It is questionable which is more important in the last line—Harry's cross to Lettie or the slight break in the reading of it. Both play up the meaning of it "There may be peace."

Lettie: I won't apologize.

Uncle Harry: Why should you? All I suggest is that you should be just a little kind.

It'll make you a very much bigger person than Hester is.

Uncle Harry is not the least bit "oily" here. He is calm, judicial.

Lettie: What do you want me to do?

Uncle Harry (*Indicating the cups*): She hasn't had her nightcap. So if—

Lettie: I wouldn't do it if it's the last thing I did.

Uncle Harry: Very well, I'll do it myself. (*Sits on right sofa and pulls coffee table to him.*)

Lettie: That will only make her triumph over me.

Uncle Harry: That's quite likely.

Lettie: Oh, I hate to do it. (*Crosses up center.*)

Uncle Harry: But you will because you're generous—because—

Lettie: Nonsense! I do it just to stop you from doing it.

Uncle Harry: Is she in bed yet?

Lettie (*Goes up on landing and listens*): She's in bed.

Uncle Harry: Probably crying her eyes out, poor soul. This will make her sleep easier. (*Pours out a cup and puts it on the tray.*)

Lettie (*Crosses down to Harry*): But if you think I'm going to kow-tow to her—

Uncle Harry: Just ask her if she'd like the cocoa. Oh, you'd better get some more sugar to put in it. She likes it sweet.

The scene is building now. Harry has persuaded Lettie to go up to her sister, he was fairly certain of that. He's done it enough times before. Now he must have time to fix the cup. Lettie, in her indecision, is maddening.

Lettie: She likes it sweet!

Uncle Harry: Don't stand there muttering sarcastically. Get the sugar. (*Lettie hesitates about bringing the sugar in to the cocoa, or taking the cocoa out to the sugar.*) Bring in the bowl—I'd like a little more myself. (*Lettie hesitates but finally puts cup down and exits to kitchen. Uncle Harry takes package from his pocket and pours some of the poison into the cup, replacing the bottle in his pocket as Lettie re-enters with sugar.*) Now hurry, or she'll be asleep.

Uncle Harry cannot exhibit any undue strain in his voice or manner for Lettie would notice it.

Lettie (*Puts sugar bowl on coffee tray*): Not Hester. She'll be awake contemplating her wrongs.

Uncle Harry (*Puts sugar in cocoa, stirs it, and hands her the cup*): You should do this with forgiveness in your heart.

Lettie (*Snorts*): I'm a Christian, I hope, but I'm a Christian within decent limits. (*Exits upstairs with cocoa.*)

(*Uncle Harry goes over to the window; a vicious gust of wind and rain blows into the room. He closes the window, pulls down the blind and carefully wipes his face with his handkerchief. He hears Lettie's step on the stairs and sits comfortably in the easy chair.*)

Lettie (*Comes down stairs with cup*): She says no.

Uncle Harry: What!

Lettie: She says anything I gave her would be like poison to her.

Uncle Harry (*Laughs*): That's the first funny thing Hester's ever said.

Lettie (*Coming down center to sofa*): I see nothing funny in it.

Uncle Harry: Don't you? You didn't persuade her enough, Lettie.

Lettie: Really, that's asking too much.

Uncle Harry: What did you do?

Lettie: I put it down and said, "You've forgotten this." (*Puts cup on tray and sits on right sofa.*)

Uncle Harry: Just like a spoilt child ordered to beg pardon. Didn't I say you weren't grown up?

Lettie: Let her enjoy her sulks.

Uncle Harry (*Sharply*): Just as you say.

Lettie: Shall we have some of this? (*Picks up the cup.*)

Uncle Harry: As you wish.

Lettie (*Offering the poisoned cup*): Don't you want it?

Uncle Harry: Not particularly.

Lettie: But you ordered it.

Uncle Harry: Not for me.

Lettie: Of course if you don't want it—(*Puts cup on tray again.*)

Uncle Harry: For God's sake, Lettie!

Lettie: Now you're angry too. (*No answer.*) And with me.

Uncle Harry: Sulks are catching.

Lettie: Don't you want to read that poetry?

Uncle Harry: Not interested.

Lettie: Please, I'd love to hear it. (*Pause.*)

Would you if I went up and talked to Hester?

Uncle Harry: If you don't go all the squabbling will start again in the morning. And I'm sick of your squabbles.

Lettie: But you saw her strike me. How can you expect—(*Uncle Harry picks up the cup and starts for the stairs.*) Where are you going?

Uncle Harry: Up to Hester.

Lettie (*Rises*): I'd rather go myself.

Uncle Harry: You'd fail again.

Lettie (*Crosses up to him*): I wouldn't. You'll see.

Uncle Harry: And the peace offering will be getting cold. Well—(*Starts upstairs.*)

Lettie (*Stops him*): I insist on going. You sit down and pour out for both of us and I'll be back in a jiffy and you'll see that everything will be all right.

Uncle Harry (*Giving her the cup*): Since you insist.

Lettie (*Starting upstairs*): She'll drink it this time if I have to pour it down her throat.

Uncle Harry (*Stops her on landing*): Lettie!

Lettie: Yes.

Uncle Harry: Lettie—if it was just you and me and there was no Hester—

Lettie: We'd be much happier.

Uncle Harry: And I wanted to get married—what would you say?

Lettie: What would become of me?

Uncle Harry: Yes, that's what I thought you'd say.

Lettie: Well, what else should I say? (*Exits upstairs.*)

Uncle Harry (*Calling*): Nona! Want your cocoa? (*Crosses to right sofa and sits.*)

Nona (*Appearing*): I was wondering what had become of it.

Uncle Harry (*Pouring a cup for her*): Here it is . . .

Lettie (*Enters down stairs to down center*): It's all settled. You'd better go to bed, Nona. Ironing tomorrow.

Nona: I know—(*Crosses up center.*) It's wonderful what a fuss we can make by just living. (*Exits upstairs.*)

Lettie: Do you want to read?

Uncle Harry: Certainly! . . . This will do.

Fear no more the heat of the sun

Nor the furious winter's rages.

Home art gone and ta'en the wages.

Golden lads and girls all must

Like chimney sweepers come to dust.

(*There is a choked scream from above.*)

Lettie (*After a silence, rises*): That's Hester. (*Starts for stairs.*)

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THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN



Makeup For the High School Theatre

by PROF. RAY E. HOLCOMBE

Department of Drama, MacMurray College, Jacksonville, Ill.

Questions pertaining to your problems on make-up are welcomed by Prof. Holcombe. Enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope with your letter.



The Makeup Crew Should Earn Its Place on the Program!

LET'S pick up a certain high school play program to find out the importance given the matter of makeup. On the production staff page we find a list of students under the caption, "Makeup Crew." Very well, let's go backstage to see them at work. On the way to the makeup room we meet some of the actors. Two of the boys have moustaches and a third one is saying, "I'm going back and make her give me a moustache!"

We arrive at homeroom 120, the room assigned to makeup. The four overhead ceiling lights glare down on a crowd of students gathered to watch two girls being made up. Where is the makeup crew? Oh yes, there's Marcia watching Miss T., the French teacher, putting rouge on one girl. Ellen is trying to duplicate the process with her patient, and the other members of the crew are calling off lists of names of those to follow, or importantly searching for articles of makeup. The noise is deafening, the room is hot, and everyone seems "on edge."

On inquiry, we learn that the makeup procedure has been more or less traditional. Miss T., the French teacher, and Miss G., the Math teacher, have always "helped out." The group of "stooges" running errands, and hopping about for the two teachers, is the makeup crew for the play at hand. Miss T. and Miss G. haven't read the play nor have they seen the rehearsal, because that would spoil it for them. Consequently they ask each student, "Now what are you supposed to be?" The director, at ten minutes past curtain time, asks nervously, "Is everyone ready now, Miss T.?" And, true to form, Miss T. snaps, "I can only do just so much." There's a last minute flurry and more ruffled feelings and then, the show is on!—twenty minutes late!!

But this situation isn't typical, is it? I have been anxious to know, so I've interviewed numbers of college freshmen, to find out what provisions for makeup were made in the high schools, from which they came. The description I've given, is a composite of the impressions they gave me. Except in rare instances, they report, that, whereas the publicity crew, the stagecraft crew, the costume crew, etc., were given planned assignments, and really functioned, the makeup crew did little but ape the efforts of a teacher in charge. No one in the makeup room knew the specific makeup needs of a particular play. It was just another show. Almost everyone reported that it was the makeup staff's fault that the curtain went up late.

Without going into further detail, let's take up a practical plan, by which the makeup staff may assume its rightful place as a well organized department intelligently cooperating with the director to change the status of the makeup from a worry and a doubt to a positive asset.

Permanent Makeup Crew

First of all, plan a permanent makeup crew, if possible. Through announcements in dra-

matic club, or by posters ask for volunteers. Art students are usually quite interested as are those who want to learn. The director should then take the volunteers through some preliminary makeup exercises to select the most apt members for his crew. From this moment on, the crew should start a well planned constructive program for the year. A chairman of the group should be appointed by the director to act as his official representative.

The first meetings of the crew should be to find out the needs, and to undertake learning its job. Look over the makeup kit with the director. I advise duplicating supplies, using two kits, a kit to be placed between chairs one and two, and a kit between chairs two and three for the use of three operators. Store away the dead wood articles in the kits so that you don't need to fumble through excess trappings to get at the things you'll really need.

Get the cooperation of the stagecraft and light crews to provide chairs, small tables, mirrors, and makeup lights at slightly above eye level for the makeup room. Practice getting the set-up arranged in the homeroom to be used for the night of the play.

Set the crew to reading the first play as soon as possible. The chairman, in conference with the director, should become an expert on the makeup needs of the play, should explain them to the crew and send it scurrying to do research on the problem. The chairman will then report to the director the results of the research and get final approval of the plans for individual makeups. A report given in dramatic club will help in establishing an idea of the importance of the makeup crew's job.

Plan a schedule of your makeups, assigning a definite time for each job. Put the most difficult character make-ups at the top of the lists. Try out the schedule by trying the make-ups on the crew. On the night of dress rehearsal see to it that the crew dismisses the last actor fifteen minutes before curtain time!

Makeup Room

Here is a suggested arrangement for your makeup room and an organization plan for a crew consisting of a chairman and six members. Near the front door of the room, station the checker who ushers the first three to seats A, B, and C, and checks their names on a posted list. Operators A and B prepare the three by putting on base color, and then pass them on to operators 1, 2, and 3, who are stationed by chairs 1, 2, and 3. When the detailed work is done, the actors are sent to the chairman who passes on the makeups and adds any corrective touches.

The checker should see to it that there are no more than six actors in the room at a time. Those next in order should be kept in a separate room so that noise and confusion can be eliminated. The makeup room should be a place where the actor can relax before going on stage! Each actor should have a time slip showing him when he is to appear, and to whom he is assigned. Needless to say, the crew should keep its appointments.

Material Designed to Mobilize Your
Dramatics Program for Effective
Wartime Services

A WARTIME MANUAL

FOR

High School Dramatics Directors

Compiled and Edited by Ernest Bavely

This Manual has been prepared in response to a nation-wide demand by dramatics directors. The role of wartime high school dramatics is discussed with the objective of effectively mobilizing the full resources and services of the high school theatre in the war program. Of particular value to interested directors is the chapter on "Preparing Dramatic Entertainment for Men in Service."

The material contained in Part II was prepared by a group of experienced dramatics directors who fully understand the possibilities and limitations of the average high school dramatics program. The chapter on "Organization of the High School Dramatics Club" also outlines a course of study in dramatics for the entire school year.

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PRICE: \$1.00

Order from

The National Thespian Society
College Hill Station Cincinnati, Ohio

When the makeup job is done, the crew should utilize the fifteen minutes before curtain time to put the room in order. One small table with materials laid out should be prepared for "touch-up" jobs to be done between the acts and the rest of the materials should be put away.

If a plan of this type is undertaken, I am sure that the makeup crew will enjoy a respect equalling that of any of the production's participants, they will learn new things with each production, and their names on the program will take on new meaning.

★ Best Thespian Honor Roll ★

For Meritorious Work in Dramatics during the 1942-43 Season and
Loyalty to the Ideals of The National Thespian Society.

- Merilynn Miracle, Harry Ward, Troupe 1, Natrona County High School, Casper, Wyo.
Mary Elizabeth Williamson, Rachel Knight, Troupe 2, Fairmont, W. Va., Senior High School.
Bill Brolin, Troupe 9, Anaconda, Mont., High School.
Robert Young, Troupe 10, Madison High School, Rexburg, Idaho.
Dean Williams, Sue Swearingen, Troupe 12, Sac City, Iowa, High School.
Richard Bouchard, Troupe 15, Roger Ludlowe High School, Fairfield, Conn.
Eloise Ernst, Mary Jean Binkley, Troupe 17, Aurora, Nebr., High School.
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Esther Wilson, Mary Francis Rushton, Troupe 21, Ben Davis High School, Indianapolis, Ind.
Nina McElwain, Marian Shiplett, Troupe 22, Powell County High School, Deer Lodge, Mont.
Hannah Williams, Lynn Pinegar, Troupe 25, Spanish Fork, Utah, High School.
John Moore, Troupe 26, Wahpeton, N. Dak., High School.
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Carol Kellogg, Troupe 29, Ashland, Ohio, High School.
Lorraine Given, Troupe 30, Clendenin, W. Va., High School.
Charlene Swisher, Troupe 32, Delta, Colo., High School.
Peggy Pouncey, Kathleen Hadden, Troupe 33, Fort Stockton, Texas, High School.
Delbert Baker, Troupe 34, Fairview, W. Va., High School.
DeWitt Swainston, Troupe 39, Preston, Idaho, High School.
Billie Louise Simms, Troupe 40, Cameron, W. Va., High School.
Nancy Braynard, Troupe 41, Glen Cove, N. Y., High School.
Ben Murphy, Troupe 42, El Dorado, Ark., High School.
Mary Lou Daugherty, Frank Bell, Troupe 43, Hundred, W. Va., High School.
Mary Helen Rucker, Troupe 45, Kilgore, Texas, Senior High School.
Patsy Shannon, Max Nichols, Troupe 52, Emmett, Idaho, High School.
Wendell Allen, Joan Hollinshead, Troupe 53, Washington Gardner High School, Albion, Mich.
Evelyn Cummings, Leo Adams, Troupe 59, Danville, Ill., High School.
Jack Neish, Bob Berghelm, Irene Olsen, Troupe 60, Boulder, Colo., High School.
Clifford Badger, Troupe 65, Rocky River, Ohio, High School.
Margaret Burns, Troupe 70, Laramie, Wyo., High School.
Phyllis Rowe, Emily Huff, Troupe 72, Alderson, W. Va., High School.
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Gloria Wolfson, Patricia Warren, Troupe 74, Middletown, N. Y., High School.
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Ralph Garner, Troupe 81, Alamogordo, New Mex., High School.
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Virginia Callaway, Troupe 84, Princeton, W. Va., High School.
Homer Espino, Troupe 85, Mission, Texas, High School.
Bob Truitt, Troupe 87, Logan Co. High School, Sterling, Colo.
Karl Zeigler, Troupe 91, Isaac C. Elston High School, Michigan City, Ind.
Marjorie Downton, Russell Jolly, Troupe 94, York Community High School, Elmhurst, Ill.
Phillips Ridinger, William Roth, Troupe 95, Gettysburg, Pa., High School.
Jean Belt, Troupe 99, Weston, W. Va., High School.
Newell William Miles, Troupe 101, North Gem High School, Bancroft, Idaho.
Florian Schultz, Troupe 103, Neenah, Wis., Senior High School.
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Carolyn Dallenback, Troupe 106, Champaign, Ill., Senior High School.
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John Busch, Larry Skalowsky, Troupe 112, Norfolk, Nebr., Senior High School.
William Bibb, Troupe 115, Ceredo-Kenova, W. Va., High School.
Patricia Churchill, Virginia Page, Troupe 118, Oswego, N. Y., High School.
Jane Ray, Troupe 120, South Side High School, Rockville Centre, N. Y.
Jo Alice McIlhannan, Betty Stonestreet, Troupe 121, Stone wall Jackson High School, Charleston, W. Va.
Sarah Brenner, William Blakemore, Troupe 122, Newport News, Va., High School.
Paul Shannon, Troupe 123, Laconia, N. H., High School.
Oakley Melton, Troupe 125, Wetumpka, Ala., High School.
Mary Watson, Troupe 126, Alton, Ill., Senior High School.
Samuel Sekan, Wm. Coombs, Troupe 127, Salem, N. J., High School.
Bill Bonwell, Troupe 133, Shenandoah, Iowa, High School.
Harry Partun, Jane Reid, Troupe 134, Kate Griffin Jr.-Sr. High School, Meridian, Miss.
Martin Rice, Troupe 136, North High School, Wichita, Kansas.
Alma Manaffey, Ralph Haynes, Troupe 137, Bramwell, W. Va., High School.
Virginia Campbell, Betty Wright, Troupe 140, Nuttall High School, Lookout, W. Va.
Ann Abbott, Thekla Trasher, Troupe 142, Bloomington, Ind., High School.
Orton Logthus, Troupe 144, Chippewa Falls, Wis., Senior High School.
Margaret Dawson, Troupe 145, Fassifern School for Girls, Hendersonville, N. Car.
Vernon Lewis, Troupe 146, Pekin, Ill., Community High School.
Ollie Lee McKnight, David Samuels, Troupe 149, Paragould, Ark., High School.
Betty Ann Gunnoe, Ann Chambers, Troupe 152, Elkview, W. Va., High School.
Claire St. John, Troupe 153, Florida High School, Tallahassee, Fla.
Inez Webster, Nellie Mathens, Troupe 154, Holmes High School, Covington, Ky.
Warren Lashley, Troupe 155, Stow, Ohio, High School.
Myrtle Shor, Troupe 156, Revere, Mass., High School.
John Fisher, Troupe 158, Bloomsburg, Pa., High School.
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Thomas Egvlf, Troupe 175, State College, Pa., High School.
Barbara Swearingen, Troupe 177, Orlando, Fla., High School.
William Kirlin, Troupe 179, Missouri Valley, Iowa, High School.
Jim Seaney, Troupe 180, Tuscola, Ill., Community High School.
Barbara Mayberry, Troupe 182, Ocala, Fla., High School.
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Richard Shaffer, Troupe 187, Brownsville, Pa., Senior High School.
Nellie Reeves, Troupe 189, Magnolia High School, Matewan, W. Va.
Shirley Christensen, Troupe 194, Oelwein, Iowa, High School.
Claire Van Sant, Ryland Miller, Troupe 200, Charleston, W. Va., High School.
Ronald Johnson, Troupe 203, Wallace, Idaho, High School.
Carol French, Mildred Hatfield, Troupe 204, Welch, W. Va., High School.
Bill Beckner, Edith Baker, Troupe 206, Elkhorn High School, Switchback, W. Va.
Jim Snowden, Troupe 207, Union High School, Mt. Vernon, Wash.
Robbie Nell Coleman, Marvin Brown, Troupe 208, Edinburg, Texas, High School.
Jack Zimmerman, Kirke Mechem, Troupe 210, Topeka, Kansas, High School.
Harold Halstead, Troupe 212, Sherman High School, Seth, W. Va.
Richard Ekholm, Troupe 213, Red Wing, Minn., High School.
Paul Tiefert, Troupe 215, Stambaugh, Mich., Twp. High School.
Patty Looman, Troupe 218, Mannington, W. Va., High School.
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 William Barker, Jean Evans, Jean Ellis, Troupe 299, Moundsville, W. Va., High School.
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 Lauretta Brummer, Troupe 314, Staples, Minn., High School.
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 Ralph Nervins, Troupe 318, Dodge City, Kansas, High School.
 Max Putzel, Troupe 322, Clayton, Mo., High School.
 Wilbert Hunt, Troupe 327, Miami, Fla., High School.
 Raymond Vogeltanz, Troupe 328, Ord, Nebr., High School.
 Ivan Bowes, Troupe 337, Superior, Nebr., High School.
 Ava Jane Waddle, Gwen Duff, Troupe 338, W. H. Adamson High School, Dallas, Texas.
 Laura Jean Hilger, Mary Jo Henry, Troupe 340, Searcy, Ark., High School.
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 Ruth Jane Wimberley, Tom Emerson, Troupe 382, Jonesboro, Ark., High School.
 Tom Staley, Troupe 385, Centerville, Iowa, High School.
 Esther Perilstein, Bud Lowther, Troupe 387, Orrville, Ohio, High School.
 Howard Bevins, Joanne Ellis, Troupe 389, Wm. Chrisman High School, Independence, Mo.
 Fred Papert, Troupe 391, Miami Beach, Fla., Senior High School.
 GERALD Dean Ford, Delbert Wengenroth, Troupe 392, Monrovia, Calif., High School.
 Bill Block, Troupe 397, Western Military Academy, Alton, Ill.

Theatre For Victory Enrollment

Our December issue will carry a complete directory of all high school dramatics groups enrolled since September 15 in the HIGH SCHOOL THEATRE FOR VICTORY PROGRAM. We suggest, therefore, that if you have not already enrolled in this worthwhile wartime project, you do so immediately so that your group may also be included in the directory. Just mail us a postal card stating that you wish to have your dramatics group enroll in the Program.

Dorothy Jean Fire, Troupe 398, Leetonia, Ohio, High School.
 James Parales, Albert Driver, Evelyn Arnott, Alice Wilson, Troupe 400, McClain High School, Greenfield, Ohio.
 Gloria Sloan, Troupe 405, Hoover High School, San Diego, Calif.
 Lee Roy Morgan, Dorothy Jane Patton, Troupe 406, Unicoi Co., High School, Erwin, Tenn.
 Norma Jean Burrell, Troupe 407, Caldwell, Idaho, High School.
 George Thomas, Donna Bateman, Troupe 412, Union, Oregon, High School.
 Richard Turner, Troupe 414, University High School, Bloomington, Ind.
 Clifford Dochterman, Martha Vergon, Troupe 420, Willis High School, Delaware, Ohio.
 John McComb, Troupe 421, Leetsdale, Pa., High School.
 Burt Liebert, Troupe 425, Tucson, Ariz., Senior High School.
 Phyllis Chodosh, Robert Shutello, Troupe 426, Carteret, N. J., High School.
 Harold Strader, Troupe 428, Cumberland Co., High School, Crossville, Tenn.
 Douglas Perry, Troupe 431, Rockland, Me., High School.
 Don Thompson, Anne Hincke, Troupe 432, Dobyns-Bennet High School, Kingsport, Tenn.
 Wynna Spence, Frank Ballinger, Troupe 434, Chowchilla, Calif., Union High School.
 Martha Lynch, Jacqueline Martinez, Troupe 436, Rawlins, Wyo., High School.
 Given Jones, Troupe 437, Bridgeport, Ohio, High School.
 Stanley Brumby, Troupe 440, Wakeman, Ohio, High School.
 Doris Davis, Troupe 442, Port Clinton, Ohio, High School.
 Gaius Thede, Adeline Miller, Troupe No. 443, Washington Senior High School, Fergus Falls, Minn.
 Lois Petty, Troupe 446, Lawrenceville, Ill., High School.
 Helen Morrow, Troupe 447, Maupin, Oregon, High School.
 Marion Jones, Richard Hales, Troupe 454, Brigham Young High School Provo, Utah.
 Mannette Newland, Jack McDonald, Paul Arent, Troupe 455, Benton Harbor, Mich., High School.
 Michael Brunetto, Eleanor Fritz, Troupe 456, Litchfield, Conn., High School.
 Barbara Bridenbaugh, Deverne Danburg, Troupe 457, Miller, S. Dak., High School.
 Harold Bennett, Troupe 459, Haviland, Kansas, High School.
 Harry Magoulas, Troupe 460, Hughes High School, Cincinnati, Ohio.
 Ted Goodson, Troupe 461, Parma-Schaaf High School, Parma, Ohio.
 Joanne Braucht, Troupe 462, Madera, Calif., Unioin High School.
 Barbara Fizen, Troupe 463, Snohomish, Wash., High School.
 Dolores Craig, Donna Cadle, Troupe 464, Santa Maria, Calif., Union High School.
 Merlin Brown, Troupe 465, Macomb, Ill., High School.
 Roberta Vogt, Troupe 466, Pendleton, Oregon, Senior High School.
 Jack Newton, Roemary Hilter, Troupe 467, Burnham High School, Sylvania, Ohio.
 George Donaldson, Paul Kinney, Troupe 469, Wenatchee, Wash., High School.
 Billy Bell, Troupe 470, Sidney Lanier High School, Montgomery, Ala.
 Madge Grimm, Meredith Petrie, Troupe 473, Celina, Ohio, High School.
 Beverly Owens, Troupe 476, Ponce de Leon High School, Coral Gables, Fla.
 Nancy Leibman, Troupe 479, Rayen High School, Youngstown, Ohio.
 Van Weaver, Patty Sutton, Troupe 480, Idaho Falls, Idaho, High School.
 Shirley Edwards, Troupe 482, Logan, Iowa, High School.
 Clifton McKenzie, Helen Ann Lund, Troupe 486, Medicine Lake, Mont., High School.
 Joe Barker, Troupe 487, Fayetteville, W. Va., High School.
 Gordon Gates, Troupe 490, David Starr Jordan High School, Long Beach, Calif.
 Al Franklin, Troupe 493, Kiser High School, Dayton, Ohio.
 Lois Holley, Troupe 495, Andrew Jackson High School, Miami, Fla.
 Bill Hatch, Troupe 500, Maryville, Kansas, High School.
 Leon Reid, Marion McFadden, Troupe 502, Martinsburg, W. Va., High School.
 Kenneth Rhoads, Nancy Wickwire, Troupe 503, John Harris High School, Harrisburg, Pa.
 Lois Nelander, Charlotte Wicht, Troupe 506, Central High School, Duluth, Minn.
 James Reasman, Betty Joe Walizak, Troupe 507, Lincoln High School, Ellwood City, Pa.
 June Albrecht, Troupe 510, Davenport, Iowa, High School.
 Virginia Brand, Troupe 511, St. John's Academy, Wichita, Kansas.
 Wilma Jean Campbell, Joy Dollard, Troupe 517, Gunnison, Colo., County High School.
 Margaret Bird, Charles Martin, Troupe 520, William Penn Senior High School, York, Pa.
 Jack Muehlstein, Charles Henke, Troupe 515, Lincoln High School, Wisconsin.
 Thelma Peskoe, Troupe 527, Long Branch, N. J., High School.
 Virginia E. Pierce, Troupe 528, Classical High School, Providence, R. I.
 Nancyle Bruce Whaley, John Hopkins, Troupe 529, Carlisle, Ky., High School.
 Rita Lincer, Troupe 530, Mount St. Joseph, Ohio, Academy.
 Bubs Owen, Troupe 532, Heflin, Ala., High School.
 Carol Halbower, Jack Nichols, Troupe 533, Anthony, Kansas.
 Lorraine Holleman, Troupe 534, Mamaroneck, N. Y., High School.
 Pauline Revels, Alice Evans, Troupe 535, Carver High School, Winston-Salem, N. C.
 Vivian Stunkel, Troupe 536, Belle Plaine, Kansas, High School.
 Lee Truro, Norma Williams, Troupe 537, San Jose, Calif., Senior High School.
 Bob Schairer, Troupe 539, Warwood High School, Wheeling, W. Va.
 Robert Diffenderfer, Ann Tobin, Troupe 541, St. Mary High School, Jackson, Mich.
 Neportia Hewitte, Troupe No. 542, Kimball, W. Va., High School.
 George Keleher, Troupe 543, Eagle Grove, Iowa, High School.
 Emelie Greber, Troupe 544, Fairfield, Iowa, High School.
 Elda Proudfoot, Troupe 546, Belington, W. Va., High School.
 Barbara Grund, Marianne Hayworth, Troupe 555, Interment College (High School Department), Bristol, Va.
 Eugenia Barnhill, Claude Harper, Troupe 557, Conway, S. Car., High School.
 Roberta Hamilton, Troupe 558, North Plainfield, N. J., High School.
 Donna Mae Sponar, Troupe 561, Roosevelt High School, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.
 Mathilda McCullough, Richard Marrazzo, Troupe 562, San Benito Co., High School, Hollister, Calif.

SELECT PLAYS ON APPROVAL

You may purchase any 5 of our Budget Plan Royalty Plays (see our catalog—page 2 to 27).
Select one of these plays for production and you may exchange the others on cast copies.



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• THE BIG BLOW-UP

3-act Farce. 5m., 7w.

By J. Vincent Barrett. Four suitcases are the leading characters in this play! Loads of suspense and rapid action. Easy hotel lobby setting.

BUDGET PLAN: 13 cast books and royalty. . . . ALL for \$12.00. Single book, 60 cents.

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3-act Comedy. 5m., 7w.

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The funniest farce-comedy yet written by J. Vincent Barrett. A streamlined action comedy of laughable situations. New and very popular.

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• AUNT CATHIE'S CAT

3-act Mystery-Comedy. 5m., 7w.

The director, cast and audience will never forget this screamingly funny play by Felicia Metcalfe. No gruesome effects. A high school mystery-comedy at its best.

BUDGET PLAN: 13 cast books and royalty. . . . ALL for \$12.00. Single book, 60 cents.

• STAR CRAZY

3-act Comedy. 4m., 5w.

For laughable situations, this play by Don Elser has few equals. Director and cast will enjoy every rehearsal. Setting and directing simplicity itself.

BUDGET PLAN: 10 cast books and royalty. . . . ALL for \$10.00. Single book, 60 cents.

• THE CUSTERS' LAST STAND

3-act Farce. 5m., 7w.

Wm. D. Fisher scores again with this new play written especially for high school production. No difficult costuming. Entirely different.

BUDGET PLAN: 13 books and royalty. . . . ALL for \$12.00. Single book, 60 cents.

ORDERS FILLED DAY RECEIVED

WRITE FOR NEW 1943-44 CATALOGUE

ART CRAFT PLAY COMPANY

CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA

Mention The High School Thespian

ON THE HIGH SCHOOL STAGE

ABOUT EVENTS IN HIGH SCHOOL DRAMATICS

Flint, Mich.

A SERIES of seven original radio scripts explaining the physical fitness program and pre-induction courses now incorporated in the Flint, Michigan, high schools were presented last spring by the Dramatics Department of the Northern High School with Miss Nelda Topolka directing. This project was sponsored as a contribution to the High School Theatre For Victory Program. Other projects sponsored recently by the Dramatics Department as contributions to the Victory Program included a Talent Contest with the net proceeds given to the U. S. O.; the production of a patriotic one-act play, *Ladies Discover America*, given for churches and community clubs; the presentation of the senior class play, *Victory Home*, and a variety of other programs in support of various school drives. Miss Topolka reports that "it is our aim again this year to serve the war effort in as many ways as possible."

Elkview, W. Va.

THE past season saw the production of *The Spitfire* at the Elkview High School under the auspices of the Senior Class, with Miss Forman directing, and the production of *Balmy Mr. Brown* given by the Junior Class, with Miss Sadie Marie Daher directing. The season's play-

bill also included six one-act plays given for the school assembly programs, the presentation of an "Amateur Hour" and the broadcast of a script, *Time Is Short*. A major event of the year was the installation of Troupe 152 at this school under Miss Daher's leadership. During the spring term Thespians devoted much of their time to the study of makeup and play directing.

Fairfield, Iowa

THE 1942-43 season for dramatics students of the Fairfield High School (Thespian Troupe 544) opened with a production of *Our Town* on October 30. Thespians followed on March 26 with a production of *Through the Keyhole* which received much favorable comment from the townspeople. On April 30 the Senior Class closed the season with their production of *Arsenic and Old Lace*. Special programs for the year were the Armistice Day pageant, *Memories of 1918*, an original Christmas musical play, and the patriotic pageant *Free Men*, staged in February with some hundred thirty students participating. The installation of Thespian Troupe 544 under the direction of Miss Mary Hope Humphrey highlighted the year's successful dramatics program. Miss Humphrey will again have charge of dramatics this season with a new program under way.—Remona Copeland, Secretary.

Boonville, Ind.

THE addition of a class in dramatic arts last season, with Miss Ravia Garrison as instructor, brought increased interest in dramatics among the students of the Boonville High School (Thespian Troupe 269). The production of plays was curtailed somewhat due to change in the school program resulting from the war effort. Participation in the dramatics class is considered as part of the training for those who aspire for Thespian membership.—Phyllis Adams, Secretary.

Ashland, Ohio

THE production of the Junior Class play, *Mr. and Mrs. North* on March 19 and the production of the Senior Class play, *Ever Since Eve*, on May 21, were the two major dramatic events of the spring semester at the Ashland High School (Troupe 29), with Miss Virginia Ginn directing. The 1942-43 season also included the production of six one-act plays, all of them given as classroom and assembly projects. A total of 9 students were admitted to Thespian membership.—Carol Greshner, Secretary.

Harrisburg, Ill.

MEMBERS of Troupe 16 of the Harrisburg Township School are very proud of their organization and of the dramatics department of the school. The 1942-43 season saw the performance of two three-act plays, *Stage Door* and *The Adorable Spendthrift*. The year's program also included performances of eight one-act plays, with two of them enjoying repeat performances before local groups. During the Red Cross Drive three radio plays were broadcast. A pageant was staged in observance of Washington's Birthday. The dramatics program was under the general direction of Mrs. Lolo Eddy, Troupe Sponsor.—Kathleen Crebo, Secretary.

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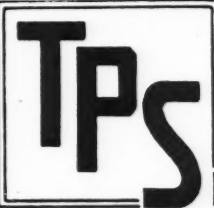
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Spencer, W. Va.

MEMBERS of the Senior Class and Thespians of Troupe 279 had joint sponsorship of the production of the three-act comedy, *Plane Crazy*, on May 17 at the Spencer High School. The play was directed by Miss Emma Neal Boggess, Troupe Sponsor. Earlier in the spring Thespians gave a very successful performance of *Mrs. Miniver*, also directed by Miss Boggess. Another dramatics event of the spring semester which received considerable attention was the inter-class drama tournament which included the production of *A Vane Effort* by the Freshman Class, *One Ghostly Evening* by the Junior Class, *The Ring and the Look* by the Sophomore Class, and *No Suit for Bill* offered by the Seniors. A patriotic pageant entitled *The Four Freedoms* brought the 1942-43 season to a close.—Phyllis Sergent, Secretary.

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Wheeling, W. Va.

FOURTEEN charter members took the Thespian pledge at the formal installation of Troupe No. 539 at the Warwood High School on December 8, with Miss Virginia Perryman as sponsor. This was one of the major dramatics events of the season at this school. Major productions got under way early in December with the performance of *Plane Crazy*. In April followed *June Mad*, a production of the Junior Class. The season closed on May 14 with a successful performance of *Icebound* under the sponsorship of the Senior Class. The program for the year also included a variety of one-act plays and other projects of a dramatic character. The Troupe contributed to the Stage Door Canteen Fund and enrolled in the High School Theatre For Victory Program. By the end of the season a total of twenty-five students had been taken into the Troupe.—Eleanor Eble, Secretary.

Lubbock, Texas

THE production of several one-act plays was part of the playbill offered by Thespians of Troupe 240 of the Lubbock Senior High School at their meetings during the past season. Among the one-act plays given were *Short Wave*, *Dust of the Road*, *The Pampered Darling*, *Christmas Gift*, *Strange Vengeance*, and *Master of the House*. Full-length plays were *Out of the Frying Pan*, given as a joint production of the Senior Class and Thespians on February 26, and *Ever Since Eve*, produced on May 21 by the Junior Class and Thespians. The production of the patriotic pageant, *Free Men*, attracted considerable attention. Two radio programs were also given. Mrs. Marie Gabriel, Troupe Sponsor, had charge of the year's dramatics program.

Bradley, Ill.

MAJOR productions of the past season at the Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School (Troupe 223) were the Minstrel Show, given on November 10 as a joint project of the Dramatics Club and Thespians, and *She's A Soldier's Sweetheart*, given in April by the Junior Class with Thespians playing the leading roles. The season also included the one-act plays, *Come to the Game* and *For the Duration*. The highlight of the season was the formal installation of the Troupe under the direction of Miss Agnes Stelter, director of dramatics. A grand total of thirty-four students were admitted to membership during the season.

Pontiac, Mich.

CAPACITY audiences expressed their enthusiastic approval at the five performances of the comedy, *Every Family Has One*, given on April 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 at the Pontiac Senior High School, with W. N. Viola directing. Among those who had roles in the play were Mary Jean Elliott, Betty Anderson, Esther Thors, Barbara Yeater, Marilyn Burnes, and Joyce Robinson. Part of the net proceeds were contributed to the Stage Door Canteen Fund. The local press estimated that several thousand residents witnessed the performances. Equally successful was the other major play of the past season, *The Lovely Duckling*, staged on December 2, 3, 4. Among the one-acts staged during the season were *The Reward*, *The Ugly Duckling*, and *Not Quite Such a Goose*. Ten students qualified for Thespian membership in Troupe 499 of this school.

Edinburg, Texas

MEMBERS of Troupe No. 208 and the Senior Class of the Edinburg High School sponsored the production of *What A Life* on March 26, with Mrs. Louise Forrest Rotsch directing. The season also included the production of the one-acts, *Three's A Crowd* and *The Trysting Place*, with Thespians directing. During the spring term Thespians were active in the production of several radio skits.—Dorothy Mollenauer, Secretary.

Newton, Kansas

MEMBERS of the Dramatics Department (Troupe 47) of the Newton High School, with Mr. A. E. Bilger directing, wrote and produced last season about twenty original one-act plays and skits which were presented for a variety of occasions in the school and community. The season also included the production of four major shows. On November 18 the Dramatics Department presented *Tish*. On February 19 the Junior Class gave *It Happened Next Tuesday*. On April 16 the Senior Class followed with a production of *Brother Goose*. A special program, *Voices for Victory*, given on April 2 by the Music Department also received a warm audience response. Plans are now well advanced for an equally worth while dramatic program this season under Mr. Bilger's direction.

Michigan City, Ind.

AN enthusiastic audience greeted the performance of *The Soul of Ann Rutledge* early in April of last spring given by members of the Senior Class of the Isaac C. Elston High School (Thespian Troupe 91), with Miss Mellie Luck directing. The same degree of enthusiasm was shown by the servicemen who witnessed the performance of a program of three one-act plays, *Fortune is a Cowboy*, *Rehearsal*, and *Thursday Evening*, on the night of March 15, with Thespians and Blackfriars in charge. The spring term also included the production of a variety of programs as contributions to the High School Theatre For Victory Program. Miss Luck has already established a worth while series of dramatics projects for this season.—Charles A. Lubke, Secretary.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912.

Of THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN, published monthly (8 times) at Cincinnati, Ohio, for October 1, 1943
State of Ohio } ss.
County of Hamilton }

Before me, a notary public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Ernest Bavely, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Editor of THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in Section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, to wit:

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ERNEST BAVELEY, Editor.

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Laramie, Wyo.

DRAMATICS activities for the 1942-43 season at the Laramie High School began in September with the initiation of twenty-three members. On October 23 Thespians followed with a performance of the ever-popular *Ever Since Day*, with Miss Velma Linford directing. The Junior Class play, *Professor, How Could You?* was given on November 24 under the direction of Miss Dorothea Knepper. The third full-length play of the year, *Yes and No*, was produced on April 2 as the Senior Class play, with Miss Louise Hillsbeck directing. On April 5 students of the dramatics department offered a playbill of one-acts consisting of *Orville's Big Date*, *What Grandmothers Know*, *Gray Bread*, and *Be Home By Midnight*, all of them student-directed. The season also included a number of other projects of a dramatic character sponsored in behalf of the war effort with Miss Linford as supervisor of the program. Troupe officers for this season are Perry Clay, president; Bonnie Davidson, vice-president; Sylvia Morrill secretary-treasurer.—Bonnie Davidson, Secretary.

Greenfield, Ohio

ATOTAL of ten dramatic productions since Pearl Harbor Day have been given in behalf of the war effort by members of the Dramatics Department (Thespian Troupe 400) of the Edward Lee McClain High School, with Mr. Wylie Fetherlin directing. Mr. Fetherlin's students are already active in a number of projects as contributions to the High School Theatre For Victory Program. One of these activities calls for the writing of "round-robin" letters to former members of Troupe 400 now serving in the armed forces. Thespians are also pledged to purchase their quota of War Stamps during the season. The 1942-43 production season was closed with a performance of the play, *Tish*, given by Thespians and members of the Senior Class.—Harriett Ann Hafler, Secretary.

Middletown, N. Y.

MEMBERS of Troupe No. 74 of the Middletown High School opened their spring program with the production of a series of one-act plays. The first group of one-acts presented included *Remember Pearl Harbor*, *Southern Beauty Sustained*, and *Messenger From Wake Island*. The second group of one-act plays consisted of *Women Who Wait*, and *Rehearsal*, with the net proceeds given to the American Red Cross and the Stage Door Canteen Fund. Thespians also presented a broadcast of *Time is Short* over the local station, with Mr. Miles S. McLain, Troupe Sponsor, directing.—Betty Morgan, Secretary.

Revere, Mass.

AT the annual Massachusetts High School Drama Festival, held April 3, 1943, at Lynn, Massachusetts, Revere High School was awarded "superior rating" for its presentation of a scene from Maxwell Anderson's *Winterset*. Of the four individual awards for acting made at the Festival, Revere received two: Herbert Levine, as Milo, for "restrained and moving interpretation of a difficult role," and Rita Fucillo, as Miriamne, for "sustained and lyric interpretation." Miss June Hamblin, Troupe sponsor for Troupe 156, directed the play. On April 10, the Troupe celebrated its second birthday with a theatre party to see *Three Sisters*, featuring Katharine Cornell, Judith Anderson, and Ruth Gordon. April 17 marked the date of the installation of new members. A banquet for troupe members and initiates was held, followed by the installation, to which members of the Reserve High School Dramatic Club, their parents, and alumni were invited. Eugene Lyons, Troupe President, presented for membership Lyndon Doherty, Robert Farren, Carolyn Merwin, Patricia Moriarty, Bernice Nigro, and Robert Tillinghast. The guest speaker was Professor Joseph Connor,

Head of the Department of Literary Interpretation, Emerson College, Boston, who spoke on characterization, and illustrated his points by dramatic readings. The annual picnic and election of officers was held in June.—E. L. Mitchell, Co-Sponsor.

Lynn, Mass.

SIX high schools participated in the Twelfth Annual Drama Festival for Massachusetts High Schools held at the Lynn English High School on April 3 of this past spring. Superior Rating was given to *Once A Pupil*, entered by the Lynn English High School, to *The Woman in the Freight Car*, presented by the Cambridge High and Latin School, and to *Winterset*, given by the Revere High School. High rating was given to *Creatures of Impulse*, staged by students of the B. M. C. Durfee High School of Fall River. No rating was given to *Blackout* given by Arlington High School and to *Curses, the Villain Is Foiled*, presented by the Tewksbury High School. The plays were judged by Marston Balch of Tufts College, Joseph Connor of Emerson College, and Mrs. Margaret S. Hurley, news writer and lecturer.

Edmonds, Wash.

MEMBERS of Troupe 424 of the Edmonds High School, with Mrs. Grace Bliss as sponsor, began their 1942-43 season with a "Jitter Bug" mixer on November 16. A second program of like nature was given on April 2, with the net proceeds given to the Stage Door Canteen Fund. A group of Thespians staged a patriotic one-act play in February which qualified the school as a contributor to the High School Theatre For Victory Program. Senior members of the Troupe served as assistant directors for the Junior Class play, *As Others See You*, given last spring. The Troupe opened its activities this fall with a group of nine active members.—Betsy Peck, Secretary.

THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN

What's New Among Books and Plays

Edited by Mary Ella Bovee

Review Staff: Blanford Jennings, Marion Stuart, Marion V. Brown, Mrs. H. A. Dodd, Elmer S. Crowley, Robert Ensley, E. E. Strong.

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Ephrata, a play in two parts, by Frank Neusbaum and Kathryn M. Popp. 2 m., 7 w. Royalty, \$5.00. Conrad Beissel, fanatical, 7th Day Baptist leader, settled the Cloisters at Ephrata, Pa. With an unseasonable amount of guile, Beissel breaks up the wedding, during the ceremony, of a Sister to an apprentice Brother after previously sanctioning the union. Although *Ephrata* was written specifically to promote interest in the cultural background of Pennsylvania, its theme, our rich heritage of religious freedom, is all embracing. Needs mature audience and acting.—Robert W. Ensley.

The Willow and I, a drama in three acts, by John Patrick. 6 m., 4 w. Royalty, \$25. Bessie took everything she wanted from life at her sister Mara's expense except Robin Todd. But on Mara's wedding day Bessie's unsuccessful suicidal attempt destroyed the ceremony and caused Mara to ultimately lose her mind. At this point Fate ruled that Bessie should marry Robin and bear him a son. A psychological play which is often exciting, too often talky. Requires convincing acting and make-up, for leading characters must change from youth to advanced middle-age.—Robert W. Ensley.

Row, Peterson & Co., Evanston, Ill.

Leave To Marry, a farce-comedy in three acts, by Albert Johnson. 2 m., 4 w. Royalty upon application. This play is a neatly-drawn and timely antidote for war nerves, for it provides an evening of entertainment the most critical audience will welcome. The story concerns Beverly Loomis' romance and marriage to Lt. Finley, while her mother is laboring under the impression that Beverly is about to marry the neighbor's son, Waldo. But Waldo is really interested in Beverly's younger sister, Percy. This is the type of play that is easy to stage, with good parts for the entire cast, and excellent fun for all: directors, cast, and audience. The fact that it has only two male parts adds to its value now that male players are not plentiful. A good and entirely wholesome play for high school groups.—Ernest Bavely.

Family Tree, a comedy in 3 acts for a female cast, by Olive Price. 12 w., 1 interior. Royalty on application. Schools which find it necessary to use girls in greater numbers this year will find this play satisfactory material. The types represent variety in age and characterization; the setting is simple. The plot itself, which concerns the sudden acquisition of a family tree by an ambitious young miss, is somewhat far-fetched, bordering closely on the farce; but some groups will enjoy the presentation of this all-girl play, with its underlying lessons and its opportunity for wearing attractive apparel.—Mary Ella Bovee.

Thumbs Up, a comedy in 3 acts, by Sylvester DeFord. 4 m., 10 w., 1 interior. Royalty on application. This play, written in the patriotic vein, is not of the usual "glory-shouting" variety, which appears frequently in dramatic literature of today. Rather, it is "solid," containing actual situations and brisk conversation. Emphasis is placed upon feminine characterization, but the four male roles are sufficient to provide good balance. The play is decidedly for youth, with hearty humor throughout; but the lessons in Americanism that it teaches, can be appreciated by any audience.—Mary Ella Bovee.

Ask Me Another, a farce-comedy in three acts, by Glenn Hughes. 6 m., 6 w. Royalty upon application. All the elements required for a fast-moving, extremely funny farce-comedy are used with exceptional effect in this play. Prof. Hughes repeats some of his earlier triumphs in playwriting by offering amateurs this new play. The plot has its setting in the outer office of *The Herald*, a morning newspaper, which is now publishing a series of articles purporting to come from the great unknown, Marco, but which, in reality, are the work of Joyce Martin, a young newspaper woman. Complications come fast and funny when a character by the name of Marco poses as the author of the articles. High school groups looking for a play rich in light entertainment average audiences enjoy will find *Ask Me Another* highly satisfactory.—Ernest Bavely.

Dramatic Publishing Co., 59 East Van Buren Street, Chicago, Ill.

Act Your Age, a comedy in three acts, by William Davidson. 3 m., 6 w. 1 interior. Royalty: \$10.00. Two sailors on leave are the center of interest in this farcical play. They come to the home of Angy and Gerry, two fourteen-year-old correspondents who pretend to be eligible young ladies. What a week-end of complications ensues involving everybody from a lady wrestler and her ju-jitsu tactics, to the commander of the fleet himself! Extremely light, this play could be done by any high school group. Situations could easily become slap-stick in the hands of amateurs.—Elmer S. Crowley.

The Great Big Door Step, a comedy in three acts, by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett from the novel of E. P. O'Donnell. 5 m., 7 w., 1 exterior. Royalty on application. Mrs. Crochet has always wanted a nice home, and when a big aristocratic doorstep floats down the river to their tumbled-down shack, it seems at last they have a start. The search, begins for a house to fit the doorstep. Finally, the right place is found but sixty dollars must be raised to pay for it—and this is no small problem. The Crochet's prosperous uncle donates a check, but it is no good. One source after another fails, but just when the whole thing seems desperate, the money is provided in a most miraculous way. Play best suited to advanced groups because of "Cajun" dialogue and characters.—Elmer S. Crowley.

Nine Girls, a mystery-drama in prologue and two acts, by Wilfrid Pettit. 9 girls, 1 interior. Royalty on application. Here is a play, truly unique in its unusual plot development. Into the midst of nine sorority girls assembled at their mountain club-house stalks the "perfect crime." One girl has been brutally murdered, and as the plot develops a second is poisoned, while the life of a third is threatened. The killer is not a maniac from outside, but one of the pretty young girls. Each scene leaves you in greater suspense until the final curtain. This play is highly recommended for talented groups in high school or college. Its different plot and all-girl cast should make it popular among those demanding suspense and thrills.—Elmer S. Crowley.

Banner Play Bureau, Inc., San Francisco, California.

The Key To Happiness, a Christmas play in one act, by Helen M. Roberts. 5 m., 3 w. No

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Samuel French, 25 W. 45th St., New York, N. Y.

Mr. Christmas, a play in three acts, by John Randall. 4 m., 6 w. Royalty, \$10.00. A different type of Christmas play. A modern setting with real Christmas spirit without Santa Claus or biblical characters. The story tells of how a snobbish girl learns the meaning of a Mother's love and the meaning of the Christmas spirit. An easy living room set. Something different for the Christmas Season.—*Donald L. Barbe.*

Young, Willing and Able—A comedy in three acts, by Ruth Lorac. 7 m., 9 w. Non-royalty. A fast-moving comedy for teen age. The plot concerns how the Beasley Musical Instrument Company is saved from bankruptcy when youth takes over the advertising of the Company. There is a nice love triangle which comes to a happy ending. Good parts for all characters. Cast good as it has more girls than boys. This play is suitable for junior high schools. A good budget play.—*Donald L. Barbe.*

Tell It To The Marines, a farce in three acts, by Harvey Mason. 4 m., 7 w. Royalty, none for first performance. Dodd Keyes picks up a lady in distress; gets jailed for pleasure driving; released when "lady" says, it's honeymoon; on returning a day late mistakenly opens "her" suitcase, with inevitable results from his wife; temporarily separated from wife by gossiping sister-in-law. All ends well, but don't look for any Marines. Easy, frequent humorous dialog, a good show-off character. Setting requires easy inset for Prologue.—*Robert W. Ensley.*

Walter H. Baker Co., 178 Tremont Street, Boston, Mass.

Twixteen, a comedy in three acts, by Betty Knapp. Non-royalty but purchase of eight copies required. 4 m., 5 w. This is a thoroughly delightful play meeting all requirements for junior high groups. Rodney Wells, Jr., a believer in strong muscles, tries desperately to make a hit with the girl up the street, Doris Mansfield. Pete and Specks are his companions. The climax is reached when Rodney dons some of his father's evening clothes for the school dance—on the same night his father, who is running for mayor, is scheduled to make an address in those same clothes. The results more than upset the Rodney home, but all turns out well at the end. Here is a play with special appeal for teen age groups. The play has good audience appeal and acts well.—*Ernest Bavely.*

The World Tomorrow, a one-act play for junior high schools, by Esther C. Averill. 4 m., 3 w. The question of peace among nations in post-war days forms the subject of this timely playlet. Dramatic and well written. Recommended for assembly program and other performances for special occasions. Excellent junior high school material.—*Ernest Bavely.*

Friends of Jesus, a pageant for Children's Day, or for general use, by Martha Bayly Shannon. 5 boys, 5 girls, extras, and a junior choir. No royalty for the first performance. This is a service of worship based on the true meaning of the word *friend*. Scenes from the

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The Eldridge Entertainment House, Franklin, Ohio.

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